ARMED INTERVENTION IN RUSSIA 1918—1922

by

W. P. COATES
and
ZELDA K. COATES

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DEDICATED

TO THE MEMORY OF

OUR BELOVED SON

SERGIUS PATRICK COATES

LETTER FROM H. G. WELLS

MY DEAR COATES,

I've long wanted just the book you've done in *Armed Intervention in Russia*. It brings together motive, suggestion and facts—hopelessly scattered hitherto for such readers as myself—into one vivid story. It has hitherto for most of us been a missing chapter—a very serious gap indeed—in post-war history. Thank you.

Yours,

(*Signed*) H. G. WELLS.

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INTRODUCTION

"TWO-THIRDS OF THE COUNTRY" want a settlement with the Soviet Union, wrote Mr. J. L. Garvin, editor of the *Observer*, commenting on the desires of the British electorate as expressed at the polls in the 1929 General Election.

The proportion is much higher to-day, as witness the debate in the House of Commons, March 1, 1934, on the subject of the Anglo-Soviet Temporary Commercial Agreement. Encomiums were showered upon the Government from all parties, and the instrument was accepted without a division.

Similarly, Sir J. Simon's statement welcoming the proposed conclusion of an Eastern Locarno and the proposed entry of the U.S.S.R. into the League of Nations was warmly supported on all sides.

This Agreement, though a milestone on the road towards an Anglo-Soviet settlement, leaves some important and disturbing questions still outstanding : British governmental and private claims preferred against the Soviet Government and the latter's counter-claims preferred against the Government of Great Britain.

Normal commercial and financial relations cannot exist between the two countries until these claims and counter-claims have been liquidated.

The representatives of the British Government have on many occasions declared that the conclusion of a permanent trade treaty is conditional upon a settlement of the pre-revolutionary claims, and our leading bankers have also stated that pending a negotiated settlement of these claims the Soviet Government will be denied normal access to the London money market.

On the other hand, the representatives of the Soviet

Government have averred that they would not accept responsibility for British claims preferred against them unless their own counter-claims were acknowledged.

The deadlock is as complete to-day as it has been at any time since the first Soviet trade representative landed on our shores over fourteen years ago.

This book is written in the hope that it will contribute in some degree to the solution of this problem.

Much has appeared in the Press and much has been said from the platform and in Parliament respecting British claims against the U.S.S.R., but comparatively little has been written or heard in Great Britain about the Soviet's counter-claims.

An effort is made in the following pages to redress the balance by a recital and discussion of established facts. The aim of the writers is to give an authentic record of the big rôle played by Great Britain ahd the other Allied Governments in aiding the rebel "White" generals in their attempt to restore Tsardom in Russia.

The book is not only a record of events; these events are analysed and interpreted in the light of extensive quotations from the declarations of statesmen, from official and semi-official documents, from responsible newspapers in this and other countries, and from civil and military observers who have made public their knowledge of the facts.

The object has been to compile not a military history, but a political record of events. Hence no attempt has been made to give graphic accounts of military operations.

Throughout we have dealt mainly with the part played by Great Britain in the history of armed intervention. The rôle of the other Allied Powers is only touched on in so far as this is demanded by the narrative.

The book is extensively documented, more than is usually the case in similar works, with a view to letting the facts themselves tell the story.

A facing up to these facts is essential to a solution of the outstanding questions still at issue between London and

Moscow. No seriously minded person in Great Britain to-day would question the desirability of a comprehensive Anglo-Soviet settlement, but many are reluctant to admit the validity in law and natural justice of the Soviet's counter-claims.

There would seem to be a vague hope that if the City of London continues to maintain its financial semi-boycott and that if the British Government continues to refuse the negotiation of a permanent trade treaty, suddenly, some day, the Soviet Government will recognise Russia's pre-revolutionary contractual obligations and withdraw her counter-claims.

This is a vain hope, as a moment's reflection should show. At the Genoa and Hague Conferences in 1922, when the Soviet Government was battling with an economic collapse and a severe famine, it refused to accept responsibility for the financial commitments of the Tsarist and Provisional Governments unless its counter-claims were recognised.

What economic pressure failed to accomplish in 1922, when Russian production was far below the pre-war level, it cannot hope to accomplish to-day, when Soviet economic production is more than thrice that of the pre-war level. Sooner or later a British Government will have to recognise this fact and act accordingly.

British claims are for war debts and sequestrated properties and bank deposits. Soviet counter-claims are for the widespread destruction of property and for the enormous loss of life inflicted on the peoples of Soviet Russia by the blockade, foreign armed intervention and the support by way of military supplies and stores to the "White" rebel generals.

Is it an equitable and common-sense proposal to ask the Soviet Government to satisfy the claims of foreign nationals whilst the claims of its own citizens are ignored? That is a question to which the reader, we hope, will find an answer in the following chapters.

In the final pages terms are suggested for a comprehensive settlement of the present outstanding issues, terms which, if

adopted, would open a new era in the annals of Anglo-Soviet relations, would confer immense political and commercial benefits on the citizens of both countries, and would strengthen all the forces working for world peace and economic recovery.

The plan of the book is to deal with the course of events in the various parts of Russia from March 1917, up to the time of the signature of the armistice (November 1918) in Western Europe ; next to treat of the attempts to secure peace between Soviet Russia and the Allies in the spring of 1919 ; finally to take up again the threads of the narrative and to follow them to their final *dénouement* in the late autumn of 1922.

The chapters vary in length because the operations of which they treat were of different durations.

The five maps will help the reader to follow the course of events on Russia's far-flung territories, whilst the diary will enable him to see at a glance the exact positions and correlation of the opposing forces at any given time.

The writers wish to express their thanks to Mr. Arnold Dawson, Mr. H. Hamilton Fyfe and Mr. Andrew Rothstein for reading the manuscript and for their many valuable suggestions ; also to Mr. Daniel Hopkin, K.C., for reading part of the manuscript and to Mr. W. N. Ewer for some extremely valuable advice.

CHAPTER I

RUSSIA'S LOSSES IN THE WORLD WAR

IN ORDER TO UNDERSTAND clearly the developments in Russia from 1917 onwards, it is necessary to recall, at least in broad outline, the effects of the World War on Russia.

The Empire of the Tsar had mob ised in round figures 18,500,000 men.

On the authority of tables compiled by the *Morning Post*, based on statistics collected by the Carnegie Institute for International Peace, Russia's losses exceeded those of any Allied belligerent, as the following figures demonstrate :

	Killed	*Wounded*	*Missing*
Russia	2,762,064	4,950,000	2,500,000
Great Britain	807,451	2,089,134	64,907
France	1,427,000	3,044,000	453,500
U.S.A.	107,284	291,000	4,912
Italy	507,160	962,196	?

It will be noticed that Russia suffered more fatal casualties than Great Britain, France and Italy combined, and almost as many as these three Powers plus the U.S.A.

What effects did the appalling losses in the Russian Army produce in Russia ? The question is answered in the " Report of the Committee to Collect Information on Russia," dated February 25, 1921, " Presented to Parliament by Command of His Majesty " (Cmd. 1240), from which we take the following excerpt :

> " These colossal losses created an extraordinary impression throughout the army. In addition to the incompetence and disorganisation everywhere prevailing, it

was suggested that treachery was also active, and that forces were at work at the Court whose object it was to promote the defeat and dissolution of the army with a view to making inevitable the conclusion of a separate peace between Russia and the Central Powers. By the autumn of 1916 a large number of officers and the majority of the *intelligentsia*—patriotic, active and resolute—had been led to the conviction that a state of affairs had arisen which could not be allowed to go on. It has been said that, eighteen months before the revolution broke out, discipline in the army had begun to be affected as a result of the disorganisation both at the front and in the rear and the enormous casualties sustained, and that revolution became a common subject of discussion among the officers in the messes of the Guard Regiments " (p. 13).

The effects on the morale of the Army are not surprising :

" It has been seen that discipline was undermined in the army before the revolution, that the rank and file were weary of war, that the officers of the Russian army did not command as a whole the respect and confidence of their men, and that a gulf was thus created between them " (ibid., p. 15).

As to what section of the population bore the brunt of the casualty list, the Report states :

" During the two and a half years preceding the revolution the peasants formed the majority of the Russian army on its 700 mile front, suffered the majority of its casualties, and provided the greater part of the 2,000,000 prisoners of war who passed into the hands of the Central Powers " (ibid., p. 75).

It is not necessary to expatiate further on this part of our subject : sufficient has been quoted to enable the reader to place subsequent developments in their true perspective.

Before concluding this chapter, it may not be without

interest to point out that although it is true that Russia withdrew from the war in 1918, nevertheless, apart from Great Britain, France, Belgium and Serbia, Russia fought longer in the Allied Cause than any other State :

	Years	*Months*	*Days*
Russia	3	7	3
Italy	3	5	19
Greece	1	11	18
U.S.A.	1	7	4
Rumania	1	6	10

CHAPTER II

AFTER THE MARCH REVOLUTION

On March 15, 1917, the Tsar abdicated and a Provisional Government was formed from a Committee of the Duma. The latter had been elected on a very narrow franchise and for that reason, apart from other equally weighty ones, it was suspect in the eyes of the Russian masses from the very moment of its formation. Side by side with the Provisional Government, a much mightier central authority arose, viz., the Soviets of Workers, Soldiers, and Peasants.

Russia was war weary prior to the Revolution and the complete collapse of the old authority still further loosened the bonds which originally held the Army together. The report from which we have already quoted, viz., Cmd. 1240 (this report is usually known as the " Lord Emmott Report " because the Committee which compiled it sat under the chairmanship of that peer, and we shall in future refer to it thus), stated on p. 82 :

> " The results of the revolution in the army were to destroy what remnant of discipline had survived the demoralising effects of enormous losses sustained against the enemy, and of the general disorganisation which prevailed both at the front and the rear of the army. A continuous stream of deserters began to flow from the front. The trains all over Russia were overcrowded with them and transport became further dislocated in consequence."

The same ideas are expressed further on in the report, thus on p. 109 :

> " The establishment of Soviets among the troops, who were war weary and desired peace, contributed further to

> destroy the Russian army as a fighting machine, wholesale desertion began, and the army became a powerful factor in the process of disintegration throughout Russia after the February revolution, 1917."

New Russia wanted peace, certainly the Soviets wanted peace, and the latter, on March 27, 1917, issued their historic " Address to all Peoples of the World " declaring that the war was an Imperialist war, that the working classes everywhere should agitate for an immediate peace, and that the peace treaties should be based on the principles of no annexations and no indemnities. It is more than probable that the members of the Coalition Government and its successors, when trying to negotiate a settlement of post-war problems with the German and French Governments and the satellites of the latter in Eastern Europe have often cursed their own short-sightedness at not having seized the Russian proposal as a means of bringing the war to a conclusion in April 1917.

Under the pressure of the Soviets, the Provisional Government on April 9, 1917, issued the following declaration to its own people :

> " Leaving it entirely to the people, in close unity with the Allies, to decide all questions in connection with the World War and its solution, the Provisional Government believes it to be its right and duty to declare immediately that the aim of Free Russia is not domination over other peoples, not to deprive them of their national patrimony, not the forcible seizure of foreign territories, but the establishment of a stable peace on the basis of the self-determination of peoples. The Russian people do not seek the extension of their external power at the expense of other peoples, nor do they include in their aim the enslavement and humiliation of any other peoples."

At this time the majority of the Bolshevik leaders were still in exile : Lenin returned from Switzerland only at the end of April, and Trotsky, who at that time was not a member of the Bolshevik

section of the Russian Social Democratic Party, returned from America still later.

It may be mentioned here that under the secret treaties between Tsarist Russia and the Allied Governments, the former, in the event of the defeat of the Central Powers, was to have received Constantinople, the Dardanelles, German Poland and Austrian Poland.

Under pressure of the Soviets, Professor Miliukov, the Foreign Minister, sent the declaration of April 9 to the Allied Governments, but, on his own initiative, he enclosed a covering letter which in effect admonished these Governments to ignore the declaration. The covering letter cost Miliukov his position as a Minister : sixteen days later, viz., May 16, he was driven out of office by the wrath which his duplicity created in the Soviets. The effects on the prestige of the Provisional Government were disastrous :

> " An unbridged gulf separated Miliukov's views from those expressed by the Soviet in its manifesto to the people of the world published on the 27th March. So strong was the tide of popular feeling in favour of the manifesto that the Provisional Government itself was compelled to state its preparedness to raise the question of peace without annexations and contributions in its diplomatic relations with Allied Governments.
>
> " Whatever prestige the Provisional Government had had among the people melted away after the declaration of Miliukov, as Foreign Minister, supporting the acquisition of the Dardanelles by Russia on the successful conclusion of the war " (Lord Emmott Report, pp. 16 and 17).

Kerensky, at that time War Minister, comments thus on that episode :

> " Miliukov's declaration, coming upon that of the Government, which had succeeded in satisfying and placating the Soviet leaders, produced the impression of a bomb explosion. A veritable verbal war ensued. And not Miliukov alone but the authority of the government itself, which had barely begun to consolidate itself, was the sufferer.
>
> " The outburst of hatred against Miliukov in the Soviet revealed the entire deep psychological crisis of the government, the crisis of lack of confidence, which began brewing on the very first day of the Revolution, due to the contradiction between the composition of the government and the disposition of forces in the country " (*The Catastrophe*, by A. F. Kerensky, pp. 132–3).

Up to this date the Bolsheviks though increasing in influence were still in a small minority in the Soviets.

Meanwhile, what was happening at the front ? Kerensky gives us the answer in his book from which we have just quoted : " As I have already said, the German General Staff having stopped, according to plan, all active operations on the Russian Front, there ensued a condition of virtual armistice."

On July 1, Russia began the " July Offensive," which ended three weeks later in the complete defeat of the Russian forces. There is no doubt that this offensive was undertaken under pressure from the Allies.

The complete failure of the " July Offensive " still more depressed the standing of the Provisional Government, and the " Right " elements, who all along had been secretly hoping for a return of the Autocracy, began to pick up courage. They found powerful coadjutors in the Allied diplomatic corps then accredited to Russia, i.e., in the representatives of the Governments who had welcomed the March Revolution.

On September 8, 1917, General Kornilov, the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, demanded the establishment of a Directory with himself at the head, and having met with a refusal he began, on the following day, a march on the capital, but the rebellion was quickly crushed by the workers' battalions who were, by this date, followers of the Bolsheviks almost to a man.

The part played by British diplomacy in the preparation of this attempted *coup d'état* is thus described by Kerensky :

" On the streets of Moscow pamphlets were being distributed, entitled *Kornilov, the National Hero*. These pamphlets were printed at the expense of the British Military Mission and had been brought to Moscow from the British Embassy in Petrograd in the railway carriage of General Knox, British military attaché. At about this time, Aladin, a former labor member of the Duma, arrived from England, whither he had fled in 1906, after the dissolution of the first Duma. In London this once famous politician lost his entire political baggage and became an extremely suspicious adventurer. This discredited man brought to General Kornilov a letter from Lord Milner, British War Minister, expressing his approval of a military dictatorship in Russia and giving his blessing to the enterprise. This letter naturally served to encourage the conspirators greatly. Aladin himself, envoy of the British War Minister, was given first place next to Zavoiko in the *entourage* of General Kornilov " (*The Catastrophe*, p. 315).

On p. 321 of the same book, Kerensky says :

" *The Kornilov uprising destroyed the entire work of the restoration of discipline in the army, achieved after almost superhuman efforts.*"

Kerensky's strictures were corroborated by the British naval attaché to Russia, Commander H. G. Grenfell. He stated in the course of a letter in the *Manchester Guardian* :

" The Corps Diplomatique, incapable of realising that the peasants and workmen, 95 per cent of the nation, had in fact more political weight than the remainder, the Allied Embassies, influenced, moreover, by their military attachés and military missions, then threw all their energies into backing Kornilov against the Provisional Government, with the joyful help of the ' Cadets,' those fatal friends of the Allies and of Russia !

" Kornilov failed, as he was bound to fail, but his failure bankrupted the ' Cadets ' as serious politicians and therefore left the Allied Embassies without any policy at all. This, however, mattered little, because nothing they could then have done (except helping Russia to stop the war, which was rather beyond the scope of their imagination) would have had effect upon the veritable rush to the ' Left ' and strengthening of the Bolshevik faction in the Soldiers' and Workers' Councils (Soviets). They had played right into the extremists' hands and made clear to the Russian masses that neither official France nor official England had the least sympathy with the cry of ' Peace without annexations, without indemnities,' but that they looked upon the new Russia as upon the old, and meant for so long as they could to keep her in the war " (*Manchester Guardian*, November 20, 1919).

The Kornilov rising was crushed by September 12, 1917, but the fate of the Government was by now sealed. What followed is thus related in the Lord Emmott Report :

" The misunderstanding between Kornilov and Kerensky finally discredited both the Government and those who saw the only hope of successfully opposing the Bolsheviks in the establishment of a military dictatorship. Amidst the divided counsels and mutual recriminations of those whose united action was essential to the stemming of the advancing tide, the Provisional Government became a melancholy spectre of Governmental impotence. Alone among this babel of dissentient voices the cries of the Bolsheviks, ' Down with the War,' ' Peace and the Land ' and ' The Victory of the Exploited over the Exploiters ' sounded a clear and certain note which went straight to the heart of the people.

" In the course of October the Bolsheviks secured the majority of the Petrograd Soviet. In the first days of November a manifesto was issued by the Soviet signed by two Bolsheviks, Podvoisky and Antonov, calling upon the

troops of the Petrograd garrison to rise to the support of the Soviet which the manifesto declared to be in danger. With this manifesto what is known as the October revolution may be said to have begun. For two or three days action on both sides was paralysed by fear and uncertainty. The Government were afraid to act because they felt the last shreds of power had slipped from them, the Bolsheviks because they could not bring themselves to believe that the Government were powerless to deal a counter-blow against them. Finally, however, they occupied the Government buildings one by one without opposition. The Provisional Government simply melted away" (p. 17).

The moral of the foregoing is clear: Russia was incapable of continuing the war even prior to the first revolution; the disintegration of the army had begun before March 1917; Russia wanted a cessation of hostilities; the Bolsheviks obtained power because among other pledges they promised to supply Russia's imperative need, viz., peace.

CHAPTER III

THE BOLSHEVIK LEADERS AND THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT

When the "March Revolution" occurred, the most influential of the Bolshevik leaders were widely scattered: L. B. Kamenev and Stalin were imprisoned in Siberia, Lenin was in Switzerland and Trotsky (then not a Bolshevik) in America. There was, of course, no difficulty about the return of Kamenev and Stalin: with thousands of other political prisoners they were released and entrained back to European Russia. As regards Trotsky, he was detained for some time by the British authorities, but after representations by the Provisional Government he was allowed to continue his journey to Leningrad (then Petrograd).

Lenin, together with some colleagues, as well as some prominent Mensheviks, like Martov, applied to Paris and London for permission to return from Switzerland to Russia via France and Great Britain, but met with a curt refusal. The next step was taken by the Swiss Social-Democrats who arranged with the German authorities to permit Lenin and their Bolshevik and Menshevik colleagues to journey to Sweden through Germany *en route* for Russia in a sealed carriage.

The permission given by the German Government for the return of the Bolsheviks via Germany was subsequently made the basis for unscrupulous accusations against Lenin and his comrades.

It is quite true that the returning exiles promised the German authorities to endeavour to expedite the return of German invalids to the Fatherland and to try and effect an improvement in the conditions of German prisoners of war

in Russia, which were notoriously bad. No secret was ever made of the fact that these two promises were given and endeavours made to fulfil them.

In passing we may observe that a book entitled *Among Prisoners of War in Russia and Siberia* by Elsa Brändström, daughter of the Swedish Ambassador in Russia during the war, was published in 1929, in which the authoress, describing the conditions of prisoners of war in Russia during the period of the world war, states :

> " Captivity was a struggle harder and more bitter than any other. There were prisoners in Russia who at certain times enjoyed a freedom and prosperity unknown to the prisoners of war in other countries. But their happy existence was as dust in the balance against those 600,000 comrades who perished in misery and privation or the terrible plight of the many hundreds of thousands who returned home mental and physical wrecks."

Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that the German authorities should have asked for such a promise, and the Provisional Government never regarded it as reprehensible and never denounced the Socialist Leaders for having given it.

It is also true that the Bolshevik Leaders from the very commencement of hostilities denounced the war as Imperialist, and this fact cannot but have been known to the Wilhelmstrasse. The German authorities, no doubt, calculated that Lenin's powerful voice would swell the chorus in Russia which was demanding peace on the basis of no annexations and no indemnities.

After both the failure of the " July Offensive " and the abortive spontaneous rising (discountenanced by the Bolsheviks) in the same month to overthrow the Provisional Government, a reign of " White Terror " was instituted during which the Bolshevik Leaders were denounced as " German Spies." Lenin and Zinoviev had to seek safety in flight, and Alexandra Kolontay, Kamenev and Trotsky

were thrown into prison, but their accusers completely failed to prove their case and after a time the prison doors had to be opened.

A number of leading Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries then actually supporting the Provisional Government issued a public declaration strongly denouncing the attempts to brand the Bolshevik Leaders as German agents.

It is extremely significant that Kerensky, in the book from which we have already quoted, makes no secret of the fact that the Bolshevik Leaders were closely shadowed from the time of their return to Russia, yet, and we would underline this, *it was impossible to get a conviction against them.* Lenin and his colleagues maintained that the only promises made to Berlin were those mentioned above and no evidence has ever been forthcoming to the contrary.

It is worthy of note that three competent foreign observers, among many others, who had exceptional opportunities of following events, scout the idea that the Bolshevik Leaders were in any way whatever in league with German militarism. Mr. Raymond Robins, head of the American Red Cross Mission in Russia, giving evidence before the Senate Propaganda Investigating Committee, at Washington, after his return from Russia, on March 8, 1919, stated that " He did not believe that Lenin and Trotsky had subjected themselves to German influences . . . he believed the people of Russia wanted Bolshevism and that the larger majority supported Lenin and Trotsky " (*Times,* March 9, 1919). Commander Grenfell, British naval attaché to Russia 1912–1917, declared :

> " The legend of German co-operation with the Bolsheviks is, of course, but a myth invented by the Cadets[1] to cover their own discomfiture, well knowing, too, how readily and easily it would be swallowed in the West " (*Manchester Guardian,* November 11, 1919).

Further, Mr. Bruce Lockhart, British Consul in Moscow

1 Cadets = Constitutional democrats.

in 1917 and Chief of the British Mission to the Soviet Government in 1918, who had many dealings with the Bolshevik Leaders, tells us that, when in London in November 1917, he " sought to combat the firmly-rooted conviction that Lenin and Trotsky were German staff officers in disguise or at least servile agents of German policy " (*Memoirs of a British Agent*, p. 197).

In the same work (p. 288) Mr. Lockhart declared, " I could not help realising instinctively that, behind its peace programme and its fanatical economic programme, there was an idealistic background to Bolshevism which lifted it far above the designation of a mob movement led by German agents. For months I had lived cheek by jowl with men who worked eighteen hours a day and who were obviously inspired by the same spirit of self-sacrifice and abnegation of worldly pleasure which animated the Puritans and the early Jesuits."

Coming from Mr. Lockhart these statements are highly significant because no British diplomatic representative to Russia at that time had better opportunities of forming a correct judgment.

By a strange irony, at the very time when the Allied Press was pillorying the Bolsheviks as German agents, the German Press was denouncing them as British emissaries : the *Deutsche Tageszeitung* declared :

> " In the Bolshevist movement . . . the hand of England is seen. By these movements England has gained much since owing to Bolshevist phrases and moneys the strike movement was called forth in the Central Empires."

We do not think that it is necessary to labour this point further ; in later chapters it will be shown that whoever may have had to thank Lenin for anything it was certainly not the Kaiser's General Staff.

CHAPTER IV

FROM THE NOVEMBER REVOLUTION TO BREST-LITOVSK

IT IS OF PREDOMINATING IMPORTANCE, if we are to appraise accurately the action of the Bolsheviks in signing the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, to recall clearly and in chronological order the sequence of events which led up to that act.

The Russian people wanted peace, the Bolsheviks promised to make immediate proposals for peace, and they promptly proceeded to implement their pledge.

On November 8, 1917, following the establishment of the Soviet Government, a resolution was adopted unanimously by the All-Russian Convention of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers' and Peasants' deputies declaring :

> " An overwhelming majority of the exhausted, wearied, and war-tortured workers and the labouring classes of all the warring countries are longing for a just and democratic peace—a peace which in the most definite and insistent manner was demanded by Russian workers and peasants after the overthrow of the Tsar's monarchy. Such a peace the Government considers to be an immediate peace without annexations (i.e., without seizure of foreign territory, without the forcible annexation of foreign nationalities) and without indemnities.
>
> " The Government of Russia proposes to all warring peoples immediately to conclude such a peace. It expresses its readiness to take at once without the slightest delay, all the decisive steps until the final confirmation of all

terms of such a peace by the plenipotentiary conventions of the representatives of all countries and nations."

The aim of the Soviet Government was not a separate peace with Germany, but a general peace.

During the next ten days, the Soviet Government had to devote its attention to liquidating the revolt led by the discredited Kerensky in collaboration with a number of Tsarist Generals. However, by November 18 this abortive rising had been completely crushed :

" The silence that had enveloped events in Russia during the past week or more is broken at last, and the news which came through yesterday leaves no doubt that for the time being at least M. Kerensky has been defeated by the Bolsheviks, and his Provisional Government overthrown by the Lenin-Trotsky faction. Our Special Correspondent in Petrograd says he is now ' universally discredited,' and another telegram declares that he fell a victim to his own fatal reliance in words rather than in deeds " (*Daily Telegraph*, November 19, 1917).

The Soviet Government at once proceeded to get in touch with both the Central and the Allied Powers. On November 22, the Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Trotsky, communicated officially with the representatives of the Allied Powers, drawing their attention to the resolution of November 8, and requesting them " to consider the above-mentioned document as a formal proposal for an immediate armistice on all fronts and the immediate opening of peace negotiations." On the following day he also communicated with the representatives of the Neutral Powers : Norway, the Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, Denmark and Sweden. He drew their attention to the resolution of November 8, informed them that he had already officially approached the representatives of the Allied Powers, and continued :

" The labouring masses of neutral countries are suffering the greatest misfortunes as the result of that criminal

butchery which, if it should not be ended, threatens to draw into its whirlpool the few peoples still outside of the war. The demand for an immediate peace is therefore the demand of the mass of the people of all countries, whether warring or neutral. The Soviet Government firmly hopes, therefore, to find the most whole-hearted support in the struggle for peace from the labouring masses of the neutral countries and requests you, Mr. Minister, to accept our assurances of the readiness of the Russian democracy to strengthen and develop most friendly relations with the democracies of all countries."

Once more it is clear that the aim of the Soviet Government was not a separate peace with Germany, but a general peace of " all the warring peoples and their Governments."

Naturally, the resolution of November 8 was widely canvassed in the German Press, but contrary to the opinion generally held in Great Britain, the German Press at first was hesitant as to the wisdom of accepting the Soviet advances implicit in the resolution of November 8 :

" It is noteworthy that the German Press, and notably the powerful and noisy annexationist section of it, treats the Leninite ' peace move ' with the greatest coolness and suspicion " (*Daily Telegraph*, November 24, 1917).

However, the Soviet Government simultaneously with its Official Note to each of the Allied Governments also communicated officially with each member of the Central Powers.

Even before the receipt of the Official Note, the topic was ventilated in the House of Commons, and Lord Robert Cecil replying on behalf of the Government on November 23, 1917, said : " It would, of course, be a direct breach of the agreement of September 5, 1914, and would mean not only that one Ally had broken with its co-belligerents in the middle of the war, but had done so in the teeth of an express engagement to the contrary."

The noble lord's declaration, for potent reasons, was a somewhat flagrant case of directing one's attention to one side of a cube and ignoring the other five sides. It was implicit in the agreement of September 5, 1914—to conduct the war and to negotiate peace only in common—that there should be constant discussions between the Allied Powers both with regard to the prosecution of the war and to the negotiation of peace.

Russia, during the previous ten months through the mouth of the Provisional Government had been urging, nay begging, the Allied Governments to meet to discuss a revision of war aims, but the official spokesmen of these Governments had ignored the appeals ; the Soviet Government expressly renounced all claim to the booty assigned to Russia under the secret treaties, namely, Constantinople, German and Austrian Poland, and her share of Reparations from the Central Powers ; all this would have made the negotiation of peace easier ; moreover the morale of the old Russian Army was gone and it had already ceased to exist as an effective fighting weapon.

On November 27, the German Government replied accepting the Russian offer, and on the next day the Commissar for Foreign Affairs sent the following Note to all the representatives of the Allied Powers in Petrograd (now Leningrad) :

" In reply to a formal proposal of the Council of Peoples' Commissaries for the opening of negotiations for an immediate armistice on all fronts for the purpose of concluding a democratic peace without annexations and indemnities, with the right of all nations to self-determination, the German Supreme Command replied affirmatively. All documents and facts concerning this matter were published by me in the bulletins of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies.

" Hostilities have ceased on the Russian front. Preliminary negotiations will start on the 2nd of December.

The Council of People's Commissaries, now as well as formerly, considers it necessary to have simultaneous negotiations together with all the Allies for the purpose of attaining a speedy armistice on all fronts and securing a general democratic peace.

" The Allied Governments and their diplomatic representatives in Russia are kindly requested to reply whether they wish to take part in the negotiations which are to begin on the 2nd of December at five o'clock in the afternoon.

" (*Signed*) People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs,
" L. TROTSKY."

The British Ambassador did not reply direct, but the Embassy issued a statement on the next day, November 29, asseverating :

" Mr. Trotsky's letter to the Ambassador, with the proposal of a general armistice, was received by the Embassy nineteen hours after the receipt by the Russian Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the order to open immediate negotiations for an armistice with the enemy. The Allies therefore were confronted by an accomplished fact, the preliminary discussion of which they had not participated in. Although all communications of Mr. Trotsky were immediately transmitted to London, the Ambassador of Great Britain cannot possibly reply to notes addressed to him by a Government not recognised by his own Government. Further, governments like that of Great Britain, whose authority comes directly from the people, have no right to decide problems of such importance until they are definitely informed whether their intended decision will meet with the complete approval and support of their electors."

It is patent from the last paragraph that the British Embassy was trifling with a serious situation. Sir George Buchanan must have been aware, unless he was suddenly

stricken with loss of memory, that no British Government which had existed up to that date refrained from deciding " problems of such importance until they are definitely informed whether their intended decision will meet with the complete approval and support of their electors " ; and he cannot but have been aware that this fact was as well known to the Soviet Government as to himself.

Within twenty-four hours, the Soviet Government replied to the British Embassy :

" The note addressed to the Allies and the radio telegraph order to General Dukhonin were written and sent *simultaneously*. If it is true that the Embassies received the note later than Dukhonin, it is explained entirely and conclusively by secondary technical reasons which have no connection wbatsoever with the policy of the Council of People's Commissaries.

" There is no doubt, however, that the Council of People's Commissaries made its appeal to the German military authorities independent of the approval or disapproval of the Allied Governments. In this sense the policy of the Soviet Government is absolutely clea . Not considering itself bound by the formal obligations of the old Governments, the Soviet Government in its struggle for peace is guided only by principles of democracy and the interests of the world's working classes. And this is why the Soviet's Government is aiming at a general and not a separate peace. It is convinced that by the united efforts of the peoples against the Imperialistic Governments such a peace will be assured."

[NOTE.—The radio telegraph order to General Dukhonin embodied the proposal for a general armistice refer ed to in the statements of the British Embassy.]

The Soviet delegates met the representatives of the Central Powers and on the initiative of the former, the negotiations were suspended for a week in order to make it possible to communicate with the Allied Powers. Trotsky wrote to the

Allied Ambassadors in Petrograd on December 7, as follows :

" The negotiations opened between the delegates of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey, and Bulgaria on the one hand and the delegates of Russia on the other were suspended at the initiative of our delegation for one week in order to give an opportunity during this time to inform the peoples and the Governments of the Allied countries regarding the fact itself of the negotiations and regarding the turn they have taken.

" On the one side it is proposed :

" 1. That announcement be made that the proposed armistice has for its aim a peace on a democratic basis on the lines formulated in a manifesto of the All-Russian Congress of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies ;

" 2. That the condition of the armistice is to be the non-transfer of troops from one front to another.

" . . . between the first decree of the Soviet Government regarding peace (November 8) and the time of the coming renewal of the peace negotiations (December 11), a period of over a month will elapse. This time limit is considered, even with the present disorganized means of international communication, absolutely sufficient to give an opportunity to the Governments of the Allied countries to define their attitude to the peace negotiations :—that is, to express their readiness or their refusal to participate in the negotiations for an armistice and peace, and in the case of a refusal to openly state before the world, clearly, definitely, and correctly, in the name of what purpose must the people of Europe bleed during the fourth year of war."

Whether one execrates or acclaims the policy with regard to the termination of the war pursued by the Soviet Government, one cannot contest the claim that they strove persistently to achieve, not a separate, but a general peace.

Great B itain's reply took the form of an interview given by Sir G. Buchanan to the Russian Press on December 9, 1917, in the course of which he stated :

"We bear them [the Russian people] no grudge, and there is not a word of truth in the reports that we are contemplating any coercive or punitive measures in the event of their making a separate peace. The fact of the Council of People's Commissaries opening negotiations with the enemy, without previous consultation with the Allies, is a breach of the agreement of September 5, 1914, of which we have a right to complain. We cannot for a moment admit the validity of their contention that a treaty concluded with an autocratic Government can have no binding force on a democracy by which that Government has been replaced, as such a principle once adopted would undermine the stability of all international agreements. But while we repudiate this new doctrine, we do not desire to induce an unwilling Ally to continue to contribute her share to the common effort by an appeal to our treaty rights.

"Though the Allies cannot send representatives to the armistice negotiations, they are ready as soon as a stable Government is constituted and recognised by the Russian people as a whole to examine with that Government the aims of the war and possible conditions of a just and durable peace" (*Daily Telegraph*, December 10, 1917).

If the British Ambassador had been striving to persuade the Russian people that his Government was still trifling with the momentous questions at issue he could hardly have chosen more effective words than those which make up the last paragraph, for reasons plain to all Russia. The Provisional Government had been recognised within a week of its establishment by Great Britain without any preliminary efforts to ascertain whether it was "recognised by the Russian people as a whole."

The Allied Governments in the course of eight months had cold-shouldered the solicitations of the Provisional Government for a conference to examine "the aims of the war and possible conditions of a just and durable peace."

The Soviet Government—as we have seen from the facts narrated in a previous chapter, facts which could hardly have escaped the notice even of the astigmatic Allied Representatives to Russia—had established a claim to represent "the Russian people as a whole," far more than had the Provisional Government, yet, by inference, Sir G. Buchanan contested its claim to speak for the Russian people.

The next step was taken by the Soviet Government alone. They met the delegates of the Central Powers at Brest-Litovsk, and on December 15 an armistice was signed, to become operative from noon December 17, for twenty-eight days. The Bolshevik delegates in the interests of the Allies and in order to keep the door open for the possible participation of the latter in the negotiations, insisted on the inclusion of the following formula in the terms of the Armistice Agreement:

> "The contracting parties bind themselves until January 12, 1918, not to effect any transferences of active troops from the front between the Baltic and the Black Sea, except those already begun on the date of the signature of the present treaty."

The Russian delegates were still hoping that the pressure of public opinion, particularly of working-class opinion in Allied countries, would force the Governments of these countries to reconsider their attitude towards the Brest-Litovsk negotiations.

On December 22, 1917, formal negotiations began between the representatives of Russia on the one side and those of the Central Powers on the other. The Russians, true to their principles and declarations, proposed:

> "1. No forcible annexation of territories conquered during the war. Troops occupying such territories to be speedily withdrawn.
>
> "2. Political independence to be fully restored to peoples that have lost their independence during the war.

"3. National groups which before the war were not politically independent to decide their destiny by free referendum of the entire population, including immigrants and refugees.

"4. No country to be required to pay another country any so-called war costs. Contributions already levied to be paid back.

"5. Colonial questions to be settled in conformity with the foregoing principles."

On December 25, 1917, Count Czernin, on behalf of the Central Powers, replied accepting points 1 and 2 without reservation, and points 3, 4, and 5 with reservations.

Joffe, on behalf of the Soviets, whilst protesting against Czernin's reservations proposed the adjournment of the plenary session of the Conference until January 9, 1918, to enable Russia to place the reply of the Central Powers before the Allied Governments. Three days later, on December 28, this proposal was accepted by the Central Powers. *It is not unimportant to note here that the sittings of the conference were public so that the world knew from day to day what was happening.*

It is exceedingly instructive to compare the comments of the Conservative Press of Great Britain and Germany on the stage of the negotiations so far reached :

"A highly interesting situation is created by the reply now made by the Central Powers to the Bolshevist peace programme. With what looks like an abrupt change of mind, Germany has thrown over her Annexationists and pronounced for a *status quo* peace.

"This appears to be the whole substance of the reply, and what it amounts to may be quite briefly stated. It means nothing more than what has long been discussed under the name of *status quo* or 'as in 1914' peace" (Leading article, *Daily Telegraph*, December 28, 1917).

Why were such terms unacceptable to the *Daily Telegraph*?

We are informed in the same article that acceptance of the terms would mean that :

"An undertaking is required of the Allies which would thrust back the liberated peoples of Palestine and Mesopotamia under the Turkish yoke, and the enemy Powers on their side take a stand which means that Alsace-Lorraine is to remain German, that unredeemed Italy is to remain Austrian."

It is questionable whether any British statesman would assert to-day, bearing in mind all that has happened in Palestine, etc., since the conclusion of the war, that the "liberation" of these territories was worth the price paid in blood and treasure between December 1917 and November 1918. But now let us see the attitude of one of the *Daily Telegraph's* opposite numbers in Germany ; the *Düsseldörfer General Anzeiger* lamented :

"Through no fault of ours we have suffered sacrifices of blood and treasure. We have crushed a powerful enemy on one side and look forward to fetter in 1918 the remaining disturbers of peace. But no reparation is to be demanded from the vanquished enemy on the day of the termination of the war. No ! Apart from always mourning for our dead heroes we shall in future have to pay three-fold taxes under three-fold heavier conditions. This will be a German peace. Yes ! The German Michel's peace."

Like called to like. The *Daily Telegraph* and the *Düsseldörfer General Anzeiger*, each from its own point of view regarded the war as a huge punitive expedition ; each wanted booty ; the former wanted Palestine and Mesopotamia coupled with the partial dismemberment of Austria ; the *Düsseldörfer General Anzeiger* wanted reparation payments.

But to return to the Brest-Litovsk negotiations. The Russian delegates returned home, and the Soviet Government, despite the insulting hostility with which the Allies had

treated all their previous advances, determined to make another great effort to convince the Allied Governments of the advisability of participating in the negotiations with the object of realising a general cessation of hostilities.

On December 29, 1917, Trotsky sent a Note to the Diplomatic representatives of the Allied Governments from which we take the following excerpts :

" The Peace negotiations which are being carried on at Brest-Litovsk between the delegation of the Russian Republic and the delegations of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey, and Bulgaria have been interrupted for ten days until January 8, 1918, in order to give the last opportunity to the Allied countries to take part in further negotiations, and by doing this to secure themselves from all consequences of a separate peace between Russia and the enemy countries.

" The programme of the Governments of the countries at war with us is characterized by their statement that ' it is not the intention of the Allied Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria) to forcibly annex territories occupied during the war.' This means that the enemy countries are ready to evacuate by a peace treaty the occupied territories of Belgium, the Northern Departments of France, Serbia, Montenegro, Rumania, Poland, Lithuania, and Courland, in order that the future fate of disputed territories should be decided by the population concerned in the matter.

" But while renouncing new forcible annexations, the enemy governments base their conclusion on the idea that old annexations, old violations by the strong of the weak, are hallowed by historic remoteness. This means that the fate of Alsace-Lorraine, Transylvania, Bosnia, Herzegovina, etc., on the one hand, and of Ireland, Egypt, India, Indo-China, etc., on the other, is not to be reconsidered. Such a programme is highly inconsistent and presents a plan of unprincipled compromise between the aims of

imperialism and the resistance of the labour democracy. But the very fact of the proposal of this programme is a great step forward.

" Ten days separate us from the renewal of peace negotiations.

" During these ten days is being decided the fate of hundreds of thousands and millions of human lives. If on the French and Italian fronts an armistice will not be made now, a new offensive just as senseless and merciless and inconclusive as all the previous offensives will swallow innumerable victims on both sides."

Meanwhile, Litvinov had been appointed Soviet Ambassador to Great Britain. Our Government was advised by a section of its supporters to face the realities, to recognise the Soviet Government, and to accept the newly appointed Ambassador as its representative. The *Daily Telegraph* indignantly denounced the projected procedure on the grounds that " They [the Soviet Government] may be swept out of existence at any hour, and *no sane man would give them as much as a month to live* " (leading article January 5, 1918 : our italics). At this time, the *Daily Telegraph* had its own correspondent in Petrograd, who cabled it voluminous messages daily.

However the *Evening Standard*, to its credit be it said, opened its columns to Litvinov who, in the course of a lengthy letter published on January 4, 1918, stated :

" Negotiations with the Central Powers are now being carried out openly in the light of publicity. Nothing is being concealed, every stage of the negotiations is being divulged.

" The results have justified this action. Whatever may be the ultimate outcome of negotiations, we have achieved one purpose towards which the other Allies pretended to strive for three years—namely, to make known to the German people the annexationist aims of this war on the part of the Central Powers. We hope, in the same way, to

enlighten the peoples of the Allied countries as to the Imperialistic aims of their own Governments.

"For the first time since the outbreak of war, the policy of one of the Allied Governments is being actively backed by the German people—at least by the German Social Democracy—and if we are given the means, and are compelled to continue to fight against the Central Governments, we shall do so having knowingly the support and the sympathy of the masses of the people of the Quadruple Alliance.

"Should the present negotiations at Brest-Litovsk or elsewhere lead to a separate peace, we should regard this as unsatisfactory, and as half-fulfilment of our designs and aims. We shall not rest at that, and our future policy will be directed towards the realisation of a general, just, and democratic peace."

The *Evening Standard* in a leading article on the same day declared :

"Undoubtedly the most important question of the moment is the new situation in Russia created by the hitch in the Brest-Litovsk negotiations. The Allies have before them a most difficult problem, and very much depends on the manner in which they attack it.

"It would seem, therefore, only common prudence to take note of the actual situation ; to remove obstacles to common action ; to make clear to the Russian revolutionist that, though we differ from him as to methods, we are thoroughly in sympathy with his resistance to spoliation and his protest against Prussian trickery. We have always held that our diplomacy has lamentably failed to guide and inspire the Russian revolution. *We have long advocated the kind of direct appeal to the German people which the Russians are now making.* We believe the Allies will commit a great mistake if they now fail to show revolutionary Russia that her cause is, in its broadest aspects, ours" (our italics).

On the following day, Dr. Harold Williams, the *Daily Chronicle's* Special Correspondent in Russia, cabled his paper as follows :

"The Germans deliberately went through the comedy of opening peace negotiations with people whom they cynically regarded as their own agents.

"But now they find that those people have wild ideas of their own. The previous co-operation had been double-edged. If the Bolshevik leaders had allowed Germany to use them for its end they had done so with a fixed determination to use Germany for their own ends. And the Germans are probably bitterly reflecting on the proverb about 'supping with a long spoon.'

"Lenin and Trotsky remain a mystery. The game they are playing is wild beyond belief. If it is difficult for us Allies, it is at least as difficult for the Germans."

Ten days later, Sir G. Buchanan, who had meanwhile returned from Russia, in an interview with Reuters averred :

"As to the political situation, the main fact to realise is that the Bolshevists are without doubt masters of the situation in Northern Russia, at any rate for the present.

"Bolshevist doctrines are without doubt spreading throughout the whole of Russia, and they appeal very specially to those who have nothing to lose."

However, our Foreign Office agreed with the advice proffered them, if they did not actually inspire it, by the *Daily Telegraph* and kept Litvinov at diplomatic arm's length.

Meanwhile, a stern struggle was proceeding within the frontiers of Germany between the Pan-German and the Democratic forces :

"A furious struggle is raging in Berlin political circles, and it is significant that no communiqué was issued regarding the second conference of the Reichstag party

leaders. While the Moderate parties favour genuine self-determination in the Baltic Provinces, the Pan-Germans shout for annexation" (*Daily Telegraph*, January 5, 1918).

"Amsterdam, *Sunday, Jan. 6, 1918.*

"Curiously enough, all the German newspapers support Count Hertling, the Chancellor, in 'turning down' the Russian offer to negotiate at Stockholm.

"The situation, as viewed in Berlin to-day, is extremely sombre. The essential matter if internal trouble is to be avoided is to keep on negotiating with the Russians. The feeling is quite justified that should the peace pourparlers be actually broken beyond repair puhlic opinion, which has been over-fed for the last month with prospects of an early 'Eastern peace' as a prelude to a general peace, is bound to give vent to its profound dissatisfaction and disappointment. The authorities are unwilling to take any chances in that direction.

"It is also pointed out that Germany's veto on the Stockholm proposal was absolute, while Germany's objection to the Russian thesis of 'self-determination' for the Poles and the people of Courland was relatively mild. On this point Hertling will have to climb down considerably, for the majority of the German people do not share his and Hindenburg's view about 'self-determination,' and are not likely to put up with the loss of the chance of peace with Russia simply because of the Pan-German cannon-makers' agitation for veiled annexation of all the occupied lands in Russia" (*Daily Express*, January 8, 1918).

It is surely clear from the above extracts that had the Allied Governments agreed to participate in the Brest-Litovsk negotiations on the basis of the Russian formula, the Democratic forces within Germany could have compelled their Government to accept that maxim.

But the Russian Note (December 29, 1917) remained unanswered, and the Soviet delegation returned alone to Brest-Litovsk on January 9, 1918.

On the next day, Baron von Kuhlmann, Chairman of the German delegates, declared that, as the Allied Governments had not replied to the overture of December 25, 1917, the offer of the Central Powers had become null and void. Speedily it became clear that the German delegation had definitely decided, whilst paying lip-service to the Russian formula, to separate the Baltic States from Russia without consulting the wishes of their inhabitants. The Russian delegation indignantly rejected the proposal, and appealed over the heads of the German Government to the German people and to the German troops.

They reached the former by means of the Russian Press and wireless, and the troops by the medium of pamphlets distributed along the entire length of the front. The substance of these appeals and publications was that the Pan-Germans were trying to enforce "a robber peace on Russia," and both civilians and troops were urged to prevent this criminal act.

The delegations of the Central Powers vigorously protested against this procedure. General Hoffman, on behalf of Germany and her Allies, declared:

> "I have here before me a number of wireless messages and appeals signed by representatives of the Russian Government and the Russian Chief Army Command, which partly contain abuse of German army institutions and of the German Chief Army Command, and partly appeals of a revolutionary character to our troops. These wireless messages undoubtedly transgressed the spirit of the armistice concluded by both armies. In the name of the German Chief Army Command, I make the strongest protest against the form and contents of these wireless messages and appeals" (*Daily Telegraph*, January 12, 1918).

Trotsky, in the name of the Russian delegation, retorted that neither the conditions of the armistice nor the character of the peace negotiations limited freedom of speech or freedom of the Press.

The Soviet exhortations by no means fell on deaf ears in Germany : throughout the whole country " peace riots " occurred and the Independent Socialist Group in the Reichstag appealed thus to the working class :

" . . . We have reached a turning point in history. The war aims of the Government have been openly laid down at Brest-Litovsk. We were assured over and over again in the past that the German Government wanted only to protect the frontiers of the Empire, and that it did not intend to make annexations. No thinking person can believe this assertion any longer.

" Men and women of the working class ! No time is to be lost. After all the horrors and sufferings of the past, there is threatening a new and more horrible calamity for our people and all mankind. Only a peace without annexations and indemnities and upon the basis of self-determination of peoples can save us. It is now time to lift your voices for such a peace. Now you must speak."

The agitation was not confined to Germany, it swept the principal cities of Austria and everywhere the leaders were met with the accusation of " British Gold." In the end, the annexationists carried the day, but as we shall see in the sequel it was only a temporary victory, and was in reality the beginning of a disastrous defeat.

Meanwhile the negotiations continued at Brest-Litovsk, the Russian delegation publicly propounding and upholding the principles of their formula. The German Plenipotentiaries, whilst maintaining that they accepted the formula, construed it to justify their policy of separating the Baltic States from Russia. The aims of both sides were clear : the Russians were endeavouring to convince the populations of the Central Empires that their Governments were fighting not a war of defence, as they wished their own peoples to believe, but at any rate as far as Soviet Russia was concerned a war of unabashed spoliation ; on the other hand, the plenipotentiaries of Germany and her Allies continued

to pay lip-service to the now famous formula of " self-determination," as they feared the effects both at home and on the various far-flung fronts of a naked declaration of their intrinsic objectives.

The discussions continued fast and furious, and the German nerves were the first to give out. On one occasion, General Hoffman, unable to give a cogent reply to the case advanced by the Russian side, lost his temper and yelled at Trotsky, " We are the victors."

No agreement was reached, and Trotsky returned to Lemingrad (then Petrograd) on January 18, 1918, to report to and to consult with his Government. On the same day, the Constituent Assembly met in Leningrad, and issued a detailed declaration to Russia and the world at large, in the course of which it was stated :

> " Expressing, in the name of the peoples of Russia, its regret that the negotiations with Germany, which were started without a preliminary agreement with the Allied democracies, have assumed the character of negotiations for a separate peace, the Constituent Assembly in the name of the peoples of the Russian Democratic Federative Republic takes upon itself the further carrying on of negotiations with the countries warring with us, in order to work towards a general democratic peace, at the same time protecting the interests of Russia."

We cite this to establish that, had the Constituent Assembly been able to take over the Government of the country, it too would have continued negotiations with the Central Powers. On the following day the Constituent Assembly was dissolved.

Four days later, January 23, 1918, Colonel Raymond Robins, commanding the American Red Cross Mission in Russia, sent the following cable to Colonel William Boyce Thompson[1] in New York :

[1] Colonel Thompson was the former head of the American Red Cross Mission in Russia.

" Soviet Government stronger to-day than ever before. Its authority and power greatly consolidated by dissolution of Constituent Assembly which was led and controlled by Chernov as permanent president. Acceptance of dissolution as final without important protest general throughout Russia. Chernov's programme not essentially ifferent from Bolshevik industrial and social programme but criticized Bolsheviks as unable to conclude peace. Had control finally rested with this assembly under such leadership chances are that separate peace would have been concluded without regard to principles controlling Bolshevik leaders. It becomes increasingly evident that present leaders without regard to consequences will refuse to abandon principles adopted in negotiations with Central Powers. Cannot too strongly urge importance of prompt recognition of Bolshevik authority and immediate establishment of *modus vivendi* making possible generous and sympathetic co-operation. Sisson[1] approves this text and requests you show this cable to Creed.[1] Thacher[1] and Wardwell[1] concur."

Colonel Robins no doubt assumed, and assumed correctly, that his cable would be passed on to the President of the U.S.A. In the interim, the Allied Governments did not evince the slightest intention to participate in the impending renewal of the negotiations.

Towards the end of January the conference re-assembled, but now the hands of the Russian delegation were considerably weaker than before, because meanwhile the Ukraine through the mouth of the Rada had declared its independence and was negotiating separately with the Central Powers. Disappointed at this defection, but by no means hopeless, the Soviet representatives faced the delegates of the Central Powers.

The Russians dogge ly unmasked the attempts of the

[1] Major Thacher was Secretary to, and Major Wardwell a member of, the American Red Cross in Russia. Mr. E. G. Sisson and Mr. G. Creed were Chairman and Vice-chairman, respectively, of the Committee on Public Information of the U.S.A.

Germans to conceal their annexationist aims under the spurious acceptance of the democratic formula "self-determination," and persistently played for time in the expectation that this exposure would so strengthen the peace movement within the territories of the Central Powers that the Governments of the latter would be compelled to accept and apply honestly the Russian peace formula. Unfortunately, these expectations were not realised.

In the course of one superheated passage-at-arms, Trotsky defiantly retorted :

> " The peace you are forcing down our throats is a peace of aggression and robbery. We cannot permit you, Messieurs Diplomats, to say to the German working-man : ' You have characterized our demands as avaricious, as annexationist. But look, under these very demands we have brought you the signature of the Russian Revolution.' Yes, we are weak, we cannot fight at present. But we have sufficient revolutionary courage to say that we shall not willingly affix our signature to the treaty which you are writing with the sword on the body of living peoples. We refuse to sign."

It is, of course, impossible to say for how much longer these proceedings, surely unparalleled in human history, would have continued ha they not received an undermining shock on February 9, 1918, when the Ukrainian Rada signed a separate peace with the Central Powers. The Russian Government, on the following day, played the last card in its hand : they declared the war at an end, but declined to sign the proffered peace terms ; they ordered a general demobilisation ; and they wirelessed the following message to the world :

> " . . . We consider that after long iscussion and all-round survey of the question, the time for decision has come. The people await with impatience the result of the peace negotiations in Brest-Litovsk.
>
> " The Governments of Germany and Austria-Hungary

want to own lands and peoples by right of military seizure. Let them do their work openly. We cannot sanction violence. We are withdrawing from the war, but we are forced to refuse to sign a peace treaty.

" On behalf of the Council of People's Commissars, the Government of the Russian Federated Republic, we herewith bring to the notice of the Governments and peoples at war with us, and to allied and neutral nations, the fact that, while refusing to sign a rapacious treaty, Russia, for its part, declares the state of war with Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria, at an end. An order is simultaneously being given to the Russian troops for complete demobilisation all along the front."

The situation thus created nonplussed both the German Government and the German Press. On February 12, 1918, the *Daily Telegraph* published a cable from its Rotterdam Correspondent, Mr. Leonard Spray, headed " Trotsky's Trap : Uneasiness in Germany," stating :

" In the meantime German jubilation over Trotsky's ' peace without a treaty ' declaration is very modified. Further Press comment is decidedly restrained, betraying doubts, bewilderment, and inability to discover any tangible advances. The annexationists treat Trotsky as a slim trickster, who has manœuvred the German Government into an awkward situation."

In the course of his cable, Mr. Spray quoted the following extracts from the German Press :

" Does Braunstein-Trotsky really offer us complete demobilisation of the Russian forces ? That is an empty phrase. The Russian forces began long ago to demobilise themselves, and they will continue to do so whether Trotsky wants them to or not. Is there then no reason for satisfaction over this sudden declaration of Braunstein-Trotsky ? No single one. There must be no inclination with us to run into the trap which is badly hidden in the phrases of Trotsky " (*Täglische Rundschau*).

" One has never had any reasons to rejoice during the negotiations with these representatives of Russia, and, as regards this last expression of Maximalistic statesmanship, there is just as little reason. At the first glance everything appears to be peace and quietness, but regarded carefully one sees one has to do here again with deep one-sided caprice in the real Trotsky style. Peace without a treaty. What is it worth ? It need not be inviolably maintained, for nobody has bound himself to it. The situation it creates need not be recognised, for no agreement at all has been concluded. Trotsky withdraws himself from a very difficult situation by renouncing every attempt to bring order into it, and has left the task to us" (*Lokal Anzeiger*).

" Fear the Greeks and the gifts they bring. This declaration has the secret object of enticing us into a bog. By creating a feeling of internationalism an attempt is being made to win back that which was lost by force of arms. We have a firm belief that our workers, upon whose sympathy Trotsky would like to build up his plans, will not listen to this syren song " (*Kölnische Zeitung*).

Meanwhile, the delegations had returned to their respective capitals leaving only a few members of their technical staffs at Brest-Litovsk. During the next few days there were many comings and goings in Germany. We read :

" The German Chancellor, Count Hertling, together with the Foreign Secretary, Herr Kühlmann, left Berlin to-day for the field headquarters for an audience with the Kaiser " (*Daily Telegraph*, February 12, 1918).

" Copenhagen, *Wednesday*.

" To-day the Chancellor and Kühlmann are with the Kaiser at headquarters discussing the political and military measures to be taken towards Russia " (*Daily Telegraph*, February 13, 1918).

" Hertling and Kühlmann were at the Kaiser's headquarters yesterday, where, it is stated, they were to confer

with Hindenburg and Ludendorff as to the attitude to be assumed towards Russia. The *Kreuzzeitung* alleges that the two latter are unwilling to accept the ' indefinite state of affairs ' proposed by the Bolsheviks, and are determined to insist upon a ' clear understanding ' " (*Daily Telegraph*, February 14, 1918).

The German Press also expressed its uneasiness at the indeterminate state of the country's relations with Russia :

" In the meantime, while the German population have received Trotsky's ' peace ' declaration with joy, the tone of the German Press is still very subdued and reserved. Many papers express dissatisfaction at the absence of any signed treaty, and continue to manifest great uneasiness at the trap which they suppose Trotsky has laid for Germany " (*Daily Telegraph*, February 14, 1918).

In Austria even stronger opposition existed to the renewal of the war than in Germany. Mr. Spray cabled the *Daily Telegraph* from Rotterdam :

" Meanwhile, Austria is in a state of ferment at the prospect of the resumption of war against Russia. The Vienna correspondent of the *Vossische Zeitung* reports rising feeling against Germany, and quotes the *Neue Freie Presse* and the *Catholic Reichspost* as arguing that, as the Dual Monarchy has no longer any enemies on its frontiers, there is no reason for it to interfere with internal Russian affairs. The *Arbeiter Zeitung* declares that if Germany decides to begin a new war against Russia, Austria must not, cannot, and will not take part in it " (*Daily Telegraph*, February 18, 1918).

In Germany the Social Democratic Party became exceedingly apprehensive as to the policy of the German Government : Mr. Spray, in the course of the message cited above also stated :

" *Vorwärts*, evidently alarmed at the Government's now

practically avowed Eastern annexationist aims, appeals to the Social Democrat Reichstag party to form a majority which will force upon the Government the view that ' no military victory but only honourable agreement can lead to peace. Our demands are no violent annexations or amputations, but recognition of the right of self-determination for small nations, according to the standard of agreement arrived at by the great nations.'

" The prospect of the formation of any such majority is, however, more remote than ever. The latest development is in quite the contrary direction, for the National Liberals, a large section of whom supported the July 19 ' no annexations and no indemnities ' resolution, have decided, according to the *Lokal Anzeiger*, for the future not to join the other majority parties on questions of foreign policy " (*Daily Telegraph*, February 18, 1918).

In Russia the balance of opinion was that the Central Powers would not dare to renew the war :

" Yesterday at the session of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Councils, the president of the peace delegation, Trotsky, reported on the course and results of the Brest-Litovsk negotiations. Not only the representatives of the parties composing the Government's majority, but also the representatives of the opposition groups, recognised that the decision taken by the Council of the People's Commissaries was the only correct one and the only dignified outcome of the newly created international situation. The speakers of the majority and opposition put forward the question whether there was a possibility of a German offensive against Russia. Nearly all were of the opinion that such an offensive is very improbable, but they all uttered warnings against an unlimited optimism in this direction, because the dare-all annexation groups of Germany might make attempts to force the Government of Germany to a new offensive. Certainly in this case the duty of all citizens will be, in

the opinion of all speakers, the decisive and heroic defence of the revolution.

" All speakers also express their belief that the large masses of the peoples of Germany and Austria-Hungary will not permit a new shedding of blood on the former Eastern front, because Russia, on its side, has declared the state of war as ended, and because the offensive by the German annexationists would have the character of an open raid for plunder " (*Daily Telegraph*, February 16, 1918).[1]

The German Government now decided to act, and to act quickly. Inspired articles appeared in the Press upbraiding the Bolsheviks for the failure to reach an agreement, denouncing their actions in the Baltic States, particularly with regard to the German barons resident in these provinces and, finally, declaring that the inhabitants of the Baltic States were demanding the occupation of their countries by the German Army.

Despite the fact that the denunciation of the armistice was subject to seven days' notice, the Soviet Government received a cable from Brest-Litovsk on February 17, 1918, dated the previous day, declaring " the armistice expires at noon on February 18th," and that the state of war would be resumed between Germany and Russia. The armistice expired, or rather, was violated at noon, and on the evening of the same day the Berlin official report stated : " From Riga as far as South of Luzk the German armies are advancing towards the East " (Luzk is 230 miles West of Kiev).

However, this laconic message gave no inkling of the, from the German point of view, very disquieting fact, that the advancing troops, at any rate at this time, were not regular regiments, but volunteers. That well-known correspondent, Mr. Arthur Ransome, describing developments at the front when the German troops were ordered to advance against Russia, cabled the *Daily News* :

[1] Lenin, evidently foreseeing the action of the German Government, was in favour of accepting the terms under protest.

" That there was some actual basis for the belief of Trotsky and others that the Germans would not dare to move is shown by the news that one German regiment shot 42 of its officers when ordered to advance. It was reported from Arensburg by an eye-witness that he saw there 70 Germans with bound hands under a strong convoy who had refused to advance across the ice to Verder.

" It was further reported from the front that the enemy were advancing in groups of 100 or 200 men of various regiments, suggesting that the Germans were compelled to use volunteers, being unable to depend on regular units " (*Daily News*, February 27, 1918).

Unfortunately, the German military authorities succeeded in securing sufficient volunteers to make their advance effective and the Russian Government was faced with the alternatives of a renewal of the war or an acceptance of Germany's terms. On February 19, the day following the violation of the armistice, the Soviet wirelessed the German Government :

" The Council of the People's Commissaries protests against the fact that the German Government has directed its troops against the Russian Council's Republic, which has declared the war at an end, and which is demobilising its army on all fronts.

" The Council of the People's Commissaries in the present circumstances regards itself as forced formally to declare its willingness to sign peace upon the conditions which have been dictated by the delegations of the Quadruple Alliance at Brest-Litovsk. The Council of the People's Commissaries further declares that a detailed reply will be given without delay to the conditions of peace as proposed by the German Government."

The message was signed by Trotsky, on behalf of his Government.

Despite this cable, the German troops continued to

advance on a wide front extending from Riga to near the Galician frontier. Why? The *Daily Telegraph* explained it thus :

> " In the Reichstag yesterday Baron Kühlmann read out Trotsky's declaration of willingness to sign peace on the terms laid down by the Quadruple Alliance at Brest-Litovsk. Kühlmann's statement was received with lively expressions of gratification, but he added that he would like to warn members against the belief that the Government already had a peace with Russia in its pocket. Peace with Russia, he added, would only be arrived at when the signatures to the treaty were dry on the paper.
>
> " It is clear that the German authorities still believe that Trotsky is trying to trick them. Replying to the wireless message in which Trotsky hurriedly expressed willingness to sign a peace treaty, General Hoffman declined to accept it as official, because, as he alleged, it bore no signatures, and he demanded that an authentication in writing should be sent to the German Command at Dvinsk " (*Daily Telegraph*, February 21, 1918).

On the following day, February 20, 1918, the Council of People's Commissaries wirelessed to General Hoffmann at Dvinsk that they were sending on the same day a messenger to that town with the wireless message of the 19th inst., bearing the signatures of the President of the Council of People's Commissaries and of the Commissar for Foreign Affairs. On February 21, 1918, the German High Command at Dvinsk handed the Central Powers' peace terms to a Russian representative who despatched them by courier to Petrograd. The terms were much more severe than those last offered at Brest-Litovsk and the last article read :

> " The above-named conditions must be accepted within forty-eight hours. Russian Plenipotentiaries must start immediately for Brest-Litovsk and sign there within three days the Peace Treaty, which must be ratified within two weeks—Berlin, February 21, 1918—Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Von Kuehlmann."

The acceptance or non-acceptance of the terms was feverishly and exhaustively discussed in the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets. Some members (including Radek, who had accompanied Lenin in the closed carriage through Germany) were vehemently against acceptance and passionately urged a fight to a finish against Germany in defence of the Revolution ; others led by Lenin replied that the country was too exhausted to continue the struggle, and that the gains of the Revolution could best be preserved by the conclusion of peace and the consolidation of the Soviet Power on the territory which would remain within the jurisdiction of the Soviet Government. The opposing policies were put to the vote in the early hours of February 24, 1918. The count gave 112 for peace, 84 against, with 22 not voting. Immediately after the vote had been taken the following was sent by radio to Berlin :

> " According to the decision taken by the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of Workers,' Soldiers,' and Peasants' Deputies on Feb. 24, at 4.30 a.m., the Soviet of the People's Commissaries has decided to accept the peace conditions offered by the German Government and to send a delegation to Brest-Litovsk."

The delegation left for Brest-Litovsk at 8 p.m. on the same evening. The Soviet Plenipotentiaries, on meeting the representatives of the Central Powers, learned that the latter were not prepared to cease military operations until the Peace Protocol had been actually signed, and the latter was presented as an ultimatum to be accepted or rejected.

Meanwhile the organisation of a Red Guard Defence Force was feverishly attempted in Russia, to conduct, if needs be, guerilla warfare, but the time was too short to consolidate an effective force and although, as Krylenko, the Soviet Commander-in-Chief, declared, the German

offensive was carried on by small detachments, still it continued and it was felt in Petrograd that resistance, at any rate for the moment, was impossible. Faced with this almost inconceivably desperate position the Russian delegation signed the Peace Treaty on March 3, 1918. The agreement bound Russia :

" 1. To evacuate and relinquish all claim on her Baltic provinces.
" 2. To evacuate all portions of the Turkish Empire occupied by her troops.
" 3. To demobilize her troops including the newly formed forces, and lay up in her harbours her warships as well as the warships of her Allies within her control.
" 4. To make peace with the Ukrainian ' People's Republic,' recognize its treaty with Germany, and get out of the Ukraine.
" 5. To cease all agitation or propaganda against the Governments or public institutions of the Ukraine and Finland."

Before signing the Treaty, the Soviet plenipotentiaries made a lengthy declaration stating, among other things :

" The peace, which is being concluded here at Brest-Litovsk, is not a peace based upon a free agreement of the peoples of Russia, Germany, Austro-Hungary, and Turkey, but a peace dictated by force of arms.

" We do not doubt, for one moment, that this triumph of the Imperialist and the militarist over the international proletarian revolution is only a temporary and passing one. Under the present conditions, the Soviet Government of the Russian Republic, being left to its own forces, is unable to withstand the armed onrush of German Imperialism, and is compelled, for the sake of saving revolutionary Russia, to accept the conditions put before it. We cannot submit to any further shooting of Russian workmen and peasants who have refused to continue the war. We declare openly, before the workmen, peasants and soldiers of Russia and Germany, and before the labouring and exploited masses of the whole world, that we are forced to accept the peace dictated by those who at the moment are the more powerful, and that we are going to sign immediately the treaty presented to us as an ultimatum, but that at the same time we refuse to enter into any discussion of these terms."

This statement was transmitted through the wireless stations of the Russian Government to Vienna and Berlin with the object of undeceiving the Democratic and Socialist forces of Germany and Austria as to the intrinsic character of the so-called peace terms.

This instrument was subject to ratification on March 17, 1918. What happened between these two dates (March 3 and 17) will form the theme of the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

BREST-LITOVSK:

MARCH 3 TO MARCH 17, 1918

THE PUBLICATION of the terms of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk had very important repercussions within the frontiers of both Russia and the Central Powers. In Russia a wave of intense anti-German feeling surged over the entire country, which threatened to prevent the ratification of the instrument; in Germany and Austria, relations between the two Governments, as a study of the Press of Berlin and Vienna of those fateful ten days clearly reveals, were severely strained.

The Dual Monarchy (Austria-Hungary) feared, not without good reasons, that Russia would not ratify, and it did not regard the enforcement of the terms as worth the continuance of the war. In passing it may not be out of place to recall that, up to this date all the efforts of the Allies to detach Austria from Germany had failed. It looked as though, where Allied diplomacy had failed the anticipated reaction of Russia to the humiliation of Brest-Litovsk might succeed.

It is necessary to explain before proceeding further that during the last week in February 1918, the Allied Ambassadors had left Petrograd and taken up their residence in Vologda; the British Ambassador, as already mentioned, had returned to London; but our Government had appointed in his stead a Special Commissioner, Mr. R. H. Bruce Lockhart, a former Consul-General in Moscow. Mr. Lockhart had been chosen for this important mission by the Home Government because of his special qualifications. From Vologda, Mr. D. R. Francis, the U.S.A. Ambassador, was keeping in touch with the Soviet Government through

Colonel Raymond Robins, whose position was somewhat similar to that of Mr. Bruce Lockhart.

Now as to the next step in the relations between Russia and the Central Powers. On the return of their delegation from Brest-Litovsk, the Soviet Government acted speedily. On March 5, 1918, Mr. Bruce Lockhart had a lengthy interview with Trotsky, and sent the following despatch (which, despite its length, we feel justified in quoting in full) to his Government:

"I had a long interview with Trotsky this morning. He informed me that in a few days the Government will go to Moscow to prepare for the Congress on the 12th. At the Congress holy war will probably be declared or rather such action will be taken as will make a declaration of war on Germany's part inevitable.

"For the success of this policy, however, it is necessary that there should be at least some semblance of support from the Allies. He could not say friendly relations, because that would be hypocritical on both sides, but suggested some working arrangement such as he has already outlined to me in previous conversations. If, however, the Allies are to allow Japan to enter Siberia, the whole position is hopeless. Every class of Russian will prefer the Germans to the Japanese, and he considered that the settlement of this question would have the most decisive influence at the Congress.

"I need not repeat his numerous arguments against this action as I have already reported them in my immediately preceding telegram. I would only add that in my opinion and in the opinion of such Englishmen as Mr. Harold Williams [Correspondent of important London newspapers] this action is quite unnecessary at the present moment as far as safeguarding supplies from Siberia is concerned, and secondly that Japanese intervention in Siberia is likely to do us the most serious and lasting harm after the war, with every class of Russian.

"I must make the same remarks about our own action if the rumours are true that we are about to occupy Archangel and Murmansk. The position here is certainly not yet hopeless. The revulsion of feeling against Germany is so strong that some form of resistance is almost certain to ensue out of the present chaos. If events turn out as I think they will and if you will only have some confidence in my judgment, I do not think it will be impossible to obtain subsequently a direct invitation from the Russian Government to the English and American Governments to co-operate in the organisation of Vladivostock, Archangel, etc. The action, however, which the Allies are said to be contemplating does not consider the feelings of the Russian Government in the slightest and naturally arouses the greatest resentment. I fear its only result will be to strengthen the German position in Russia both during the war and afterwards, and at the same time to destroy all hopes of resistance on the part of the Russians themselves.

"I feel sure that you can have no idea of the feeling which Japanese intervention will arouse. Even the Cadet Press which cannot be accused of Bolshevik sympathies is loud with its denunciation of this crime against Russia, and is now preaching support of any party that will oppose Germany and save the revolution.

"If ever the Allies have had a chance in Russia since the revolution, the Germans have given it to them by the exorbitant peace terms they have imposed on Russia. And now when Germany's aims have been unmasked to the whole world, the Allies are to nullify the benefits of this by allowing the Japanese to enter Siberia.

"If His Majesty's Government does not wish to see Germany paramount in Russia, then I would most earnestly implore you not to neglect this opportunity.

"The Congress meets on March 12th. Empower me to inform Lenin that the question of Japanese intervention has been shelved, that we will persuade the Chinese to remove the embargo on foodstuffs, that we are prepared

to support the Bolsheviks in so far as they will oppose Germany and that we invite his suggestions as to the best way in which this help can be given. In return for this, there is every chance that war will be declared (in fact, war between the Bolsheviks and Germany is in any case inevitable) and that it will arouse a certain amount of enthusiasm. Further, I think I can obtain assurances that the Russian Government will at any rate for the present refrain from revolutionary propaganda in England.

"I cannot help feeling that this is our last chance. If we accept it, we stand to gain considerably, and in any case we can lose nothing more than we have lost already.

"I leave in a few days for Moscow. Please telegraph your answer in duplicate both to Moscow and Petrograd.

"Please show my telegram to the Prime Minister and Lord Milner.

"(*Signed*) LOCKHART."

On the same day Trotsky handed the following Note to Colonel Robins for transmission to the Government of the U.S.A. :

"In case (*a*) the all-Russian congress of the Soviets will refuse to ratify the peace treaty with Germany, or (*b*) if the German Government, breaking the peace treaty, will renew the offensive in order to continue its robbers' raid, or (*c*) if the Soviet Government will be forced by the actions of Germany to renounce the peace treaty—before or after its ratification—and to renew hostilities—

"In all these cases it is very important for the military and political plans of the Soviet power for replies to be given to the following questions :

"1. Can the Soviet Government rely on the support of the United States of North America, Great Britain, and France in its struggle against Germany ?

"2. What kind of support could be furnished in the nearest future, and on what conditions—military equipment, transportation supplies, living necessities ?

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"3. What kind of support would be furnished particularly and especially by the United States?

"Should Japan—in consequence of an open or tacit understanding with Germany or without such an understanding—attempt to seize Vladivostock and the Eastern-Siberian Railway, which would threaten to cut off Russia from the Pacific Ocean and would greatly impede the concentration of Soviet troops toward the East about the Urals—in such case what steps would be taken by the other allies, particularly and especially by the United States, to prevent a Japanese landing on our Far East, and to insure uninterrupted communications with Russia through the Siberian route?

"In the opinion of the Government of the United States, to what extent—under the above-mentioned circumstances—would aid be assured from Great Britain through Murmansk and Archangel? What steps could the Government of Great Britain undertake in order to assure this aid and thereby to undermine the foundation of the rumours of the hostile plans against Russia on the part of Great Britain in the nearest future?

"All these questions are conditioned with the self-understood assumption that the internal and foreign policies of the Soviet Government will continue to be directed in accord with the principles of international socialism and that the Soviet Government retains its complete independence of all non-socialist Governments."

Mr. Lockhart's despatch and the Soviet Note to Colonel Robins call for little explanatory comment, with perhaps the possible exception of the references to Japan. For some time previous to these events it had become increasingly clear that the Military Party in Japan had been casting covetous eyes on the Eastern Provinces of Siberia, that Japanese diplomacy had been sounding the Chancelleries of London, Paris and Washington as to their attitude towards a proposed landing of Japanese forces in the Maritime

Provinces, and that while Britain and France were prepared to lend no unwilling ears to the honeyed tones of Tokio, the Government of the U.S.A. had stood pat on its traditional policy of endeavouring to keep Japan off the mainland of Asia; also semi-inspired (to use no stronger term) articles constantly made their appearance in the Japanese Press on the theme "Asia for the Asiatics."

It may be asked were these overtures of the Russian Government to London and Washington seriously and honestly meant? Note the following:

(*a*) Mr. Bruce Lockhart, as is quite clear from his despatch, had no doubts on this score.

(*b*) Mr. Francis, the U.S.A. Ambassador, in effect, endorsed the judgment of Mr. Lockhart: Mr. Francis on March 9, 1918, cabled his Government:

"I cannot too strongly urge the folly of an invasion by the Japanese now. It is possible that the Congress at Moscow may ratify the peace, but if I receive assurance from you that the Japanese peril is baseless I am of the opinion that the Congress will reject this humiliating peace. The Soviet Government is the only power which is able to offer resistance to the German advance and consequently should be assisted if it is sincerely antagonistic to Germany. In any case the peace ratification only gives Russia a breathing spell as the terms thereof are fatal to Bolshevikism as well as to the integrity of Russia."

(*c*) The *Daily Telegraph's* Special Correspondent in Petrograd cabled his paper:

"The war party seems to be daily gaining ground, and it is a moot question whether the Moscow Conference may not end in tearing the treaty to pieces and declaring a wild and desperate revolutionary war on Germany.

"I still insist that, in spite of the ruin and suffering caused by the Bolsheviks, in spite of the crushing military defeat they have brought on Russia, their leaders were

emphatically not intentionally working for German interests. They were working fanatically for their own revolutionary aims. They have been worsted in their amazing encounter with Germany, and now it is against German imperialism that the chief violence of their wrath is directed. For the moment they are carrying on among the masses a furious agitation against Germany, and it is certainly astonishing that the men who despised patriotism, who did their best to kill patriotic feeling, are now successfully stimulating a patriotic feeling of a new type (*Daily Telegraph*, March 8, 1918).

(*d*) Mr. Charles Stevenson Smith, head of the Russian Bureau of the American Associated Press, after a long interview with Trotsky cabled to the U.S.A. : " Whether Moscow Congress approves or rejects peace apparently depends largely on attitude of Entente Allies towards Soviet Government."

(*e*) Many other Press correspondents from Allied and neutral countries cabled corroborative conclusions to their respective journals.

How did the Governments of the U.S.A. and Great Britain react to the advice of their experienced diplomatic representatives on the spot endorsed by the judgment of by no means pro-Bolshevist journalists ? The two Governments pursued opposite policies respecting the proposed landing of Japanese troops. The U.S.A. Government in unmistakable terms opposed the project. President Wilson also cabled a message to the Soviet Congress when it met declaring :

" May I not take advantage of the meeting of the Congress of the Soviets to express the sincere sympathy which the people of the United States feel for the Russian people at this moment when the German power has been thrust in to interrupt and turn back the whole struggle for freedom and substitute the wishes of Germany for the purpose of the people of Russia ?

" Although the Government of the United States is, unhappily, not now in a position to render the direct and effective aid it would wish to render, I beg to assure the people of Russia through the Congress that it will avail itself of every opportunity to secure for Russia once more complete sovereignty and independence in her own affairs, and full restoration to her great rôle in the life of Europe and the modern world.

" The whole heart of the people of the United States is with the people of Russia in the attempt to free themselves forever from autocratic government and become the masters of their own life.

" Woodrow Wilson."

On the other hand, the British Government procrastinated and shuffled, but finally gave its consent to the proposal of Tokio.

Meanwhile, important events had taken place and equally important happenings were occurring in Russia. Trotsky had been transferred from the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs to the Commissariat for War, and Chicherin had been appointed to the vacant office. The seat of Government had been removed from Petrograd to Moscow, and accredited delegates were arriving in the new capital from every corner of Russia's vast territories in readiness for the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, which would have to decide to ratify or to reject the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.

The first session of the Congress was scheduled for March 12, 1918, but as there had been some unavoidable delay in despatching Trotsky's note to Colonel Robins in code to Washington, the opening was postponed till March 14 to give the White House ample time to reply.

" Coming events cast their shadows before," Mr. Percival Landon, writing in the *Daily Telegraph* averred :

" The war will, in fact, be a war within a war, and its consequences will naturally lie outside any settlement that may be made at the Peace Congress that terminates

the world struggle. Naturally, Japan will be expected to confine her activities to securing the territory necessary to protect her existing boundaries.

"Beyond this, indeed, it is inconceivable that she should wish to go. It is true that she has a population of 77,000,000—chiefly pent up on the mainland of the old country—and that she had therefore a vast reserve of man-power to draw upon—a reserve which would soon have needed an outlet in any case—but the rich province of Manchuria, and the not infertile regions bordering upon the last section of the Vladivostock railway, will absorb all her energies for many years to come."

This article created a profound impression at the time, and subsequent developments demonstrated that it was in accord with the considered judgment of Whitehall. Meanwhile, Moscow waited.

March 14, 1918, came, but there were no official replies from London or Washington. The Congress opened, and without delay proceeded to discuss the terms of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. The majority of the speakers passionately opposed ratification. On the same day, the House of Commons discussed the question of assistance for Russia and the proposal of Japan to land her legions in Eastern Siberia. Mr. Lees-Smith and Mr. MacCallum Scott resolutely opposed the project of Tokio. Mr. Scott in the course of his attack said :

"Intervention at present by Japan or by any other of the Allies would be one of those errors which lose campaigns and turn the course of history."

A. J. Balfour (as he was then), the Foreign Secretary, first paid a tribute to the sincerity of the intentions of the Soviet Government ; he said :

"Now they [the Bolsheviks] express the desire—I am sure they express it genuinely and earnestly—that they should reconstitute the Russian Army for the purpose of

Russian defence, and they would welcome our assistance doubtless in carrying out this object."

However, the Foreign Secretary was, or at least said he was, doubtful as to the possibility of the Bolsheviks succeeding in reconsolidating the army ; he continued :

"But how can we reconstitute it [the Russian Army] for purposes of national defence? Can you improvise a new instrument when fragments of the old instrument are lying shattered around you? It cannot be done in a day."

Balfour concluded :

"Therefore the question will inevitably be asked : Can any of the Allies give to Russia in her extremity that help and that sympathy of which she so sorely stands in need? It is help and sympathy which the Allies desire to give, not invasion and plunder. I agree that there may be circumstances, prejudices and feelings which render assistance in the East by the only country which can give it in the East a question of difficulty and doubt—a question which must be weighed in every balance and looked at from every point of view, but that the Allies—America, Britain, France, Italy and Japan—should do what they can at this moment to help Russia, if she fails to help herself, though the great crisis of her destiny appears to me to be beyond doubt, and I will not reject, *a priori*, any suggestion which seems to offer the slightest solution of our doing any good in that direction. I do not think this debate should finish without repudiating the suggestion made that Japan is moved by selfish and dishonourable motives in any course which may have been discussed in Japan, either among her own statesmen or the Allies."

It is evident that the British Government had by this time definitely agreed not to oppose, to use no stronger term, the occupation of Eastern Siberia by the forces of the Mikado.

At this juncture it is necessary to make but one comment

on the Foreign Secretary's declarations. He was an unfortunate prophet : not only without the help, but despite the armed opposition of the Allied Governments, the Soviet authorities raised a new army, the Red Army, of over six millions, a task which would have been far easier had the British Government acted on the advice of its own representative on the spot, Mr. Lockhart.

It is inconceivable that Japan would have persisted in her sinister intentions had her partner in the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, Great Britain, supported whole-heartedly the sustained opposition of the U.S.A. to the imperialistic aims of Japan. In fact Japan, after a futile attempt to obtain American approval, made no bones about the fact that so long as she secured British sanction she would not unduly worry over American opinion. Shortly before the date of the Foreign Secretary's speech, from which we have just quoted, the Earl of Reading and Mr. Tanaka, the Japanese Chargé d'Affaires, had separate prolonged conferences with Mr. Lansing, and on the following day the Washington Correspondent of the Associated Press cabled to the world Press :

> " It is gathered here that the Japanese Government holds the view that it does not require any warrant from the Entente generally, or from America, to embark upon a campaign in Siberia, *although an exception is made in the case of Great Britain, because of the close alliance existing between the two countries, which expressly covers their joint interests in the Asiatic mainland.* However, owing to the co-operation of Japan, America, France, and Italy in dealing with other phases of the Eastern question, it is understood the Mikado has indicated that he would welcome the voluntary approval of the Governments of these countries to any radical programme which he might feel obliged to adopt in relation to Russia's Asiatic territories." (Our italics.)

This cable requires no comment. Let us return to the historic proceedings in the new capital of Russia. The discussion on the terms of the Treaty continued on March 15,

1918, and, as on the previous day, most of the participants opposed ratification.

Meanwhile, between March 3 and this date, the military position had considerably worsened for the Soviets. In the North, Finland, to which they had granted independence, had invited the Government of the Reich to land troops on its territory with the object of crushing the revolutionary movement there, also to occupy the Aland Islands : two requests which Germany promptly fulfilled. In the South, events had moved rapidly even for a revolutionary period. A Government of Workers' and Peasants' Soviets had overthrown and replaced the Rada over the greater part of the Ukraine. The Rada itself only held sway in a small part of the Eastern provinces where it was maintained by German bayonets. The deposed Government invited Germany and her associates " to restore order in the Ukraine," a request which was granted with alacrity : the troops of the Central Powers rapidly, though not without meeting with resistance, advanced into the Ukraine, occupying among other towns, Kiev and Odessa.

When the morning of March 16 dawned, Germany and her associates were in occupation of the Aland Islands, were masters in Finland, were in possession of Narva (a hundred miles to the east of Leningrad), and dominated, for all practical purposes, that immense area west of a line stretching from Narva to Odessa, but in parts bulging deep into the Ukraine, far to the east of a direct line between these two towns.

March 16, 1918, was the day of the fateful decision. Most of the speeches were still directed against ratification. Towards midnight, Lenin sent for Colonel Robins. What passed between them is recorded thus by Mr. William Hard in *Raymond Robins' Own Story* (pp. 151–2) :

> *Lenin :* " What have you heard from your Government ? "
>
> *Robins :* " Nothing. . . . What has Lockhart heard from London ? "

Lenin: "Nothing. I shall now speak for the peace. It will be ratified."

Lenin spoke for an hour and twenty minutes, and concluded with the words:

"We are compelled to sign a Tilsit peace. We must not deceive ourselves. We must have courage to face the unadorned, bitter truth.

"It is not true that we have betrayed our ideals or our friends, when we signed the Tilsit peace. We have betrayed nothing and nobody. We have not sanctioned or covered any lie. We have not refused to aid any friend or comrade in misfortune in any way we could, or by every means at our disposal. A commander who leads into the interior the remnants of an army which is defeated or disorganized by disorderly flight and who, if necessary, protects this retreat by a most humiliating and oppressive peace, is not betraying those parts of the army which he cannot help and which are cut off by the enemy. Such a commander is only doing his duty. He is choosing the only way to save what can still be saved. He is scorning adventures, telling the people the bitter truth, 'yielding territory in order to win time,' utilizing any, even the shortest, respite, in order to gather again his forces and to give the army which is affected by disintegration and demoralization a chance to rest and recover."

Lenin sat down, and the vote was taken immediately. The decision was by no means overwhelming: 724 delegates voted for ratification, 276 against, and 204 abstained. There can be little doubt that had London and Washington acted on the sage advice tendered by Mr. Lockhart and Colonel Robins, Russia would not have quitted the war.

The decision was wired to Germany and the ratification was duly effected. When the terms of the treaty and the violent policy pursued by the Central Powers were reported to the Reichstag, so great was the dissatisfaction within

Germany, that the spokesmen for the Wilhelmstrasse endeavoured to allay these feelings by contending that the intransigence of the Russian delegation left no other alternative to the Central Powers. The German Imperial Chancellor, Count Hertling, in the course of his speech said:

"You remember the endless speeches which were intended not so much for the delegates there assembled, as for the public at large, and which caused the desired goal of understanding to recede into the distance. You remember the repeated interruptions, the rupture and resumption of negotiations. A point had been reached where 'Yes' or 'No' had to be said. On March 3 peace was concluded at Brest-Litovsk, and on March 16 it was ratified by the competent Assembly at Moscow."

The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Baron von dem Bussche, declared:

"Trotsky did not desire the conclusion of peace. He primarily desired to instigate our country into rebellion, and he firmly counted on a revolution in Germany and Austria-Hungary to help him to veil the fact of a Russian defeat. He gave clear expression to his disappointment in this connection. He never really negotiated at all. No choice was therefore left to us but to draw military conclusions from the breaking off of the negotiations by Trotsky, and, when the desired effect immediately followed, to put our demands into a form which left no room for further protraction of the negotiations. It cannot therefore be wondered at that, in consequence of such an equivocal attitude on the part of our opponents, our demands should more than ever before aim at securing safeguards for our future, and be raised in consequence."

Herr David, a Socialist Deputy who followed, stated:

"The Brest-Litovsk peace is not a peace of understanding, but an unvarnished peace by force. Not only did the

Bolsheviks capitulate, but our diplomatists capitulated to the representatives of the purely militarist idea of might. The road to a democratic understanding was barricaded by our demand that the self-determination of the border peoples was to be regarded in the sense of severance from Russia. To that end General Hoffmann cast the victor's sword into the scale. This peace has evoked dissatisfaction among the widest circles of the German nation and has shaken confidence in the honesty of German policy."

Subsequent events leave no room for doubt that Herr David's concluding sentence did not contain a word of exaggeration, also that when Germany forced the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk on Russia she blazed the trail of her own defeat.

CHAPTER VI

AFTER BREST-LITOVSK: THE INTERNAL POSITION

IMMEDIATELY after the establishment of the Soviet Government there were, as mentioned in a previous chapter, a series of revolts. These were speedily suppressed. Kerensky and a number of officers endeavoured to organise a march on Petrograd; they penetrated as far as Tsarskoe Selo, but were crushingly defeated, Kerensky just managing to escape with his life. In Petrograd, Moscow, and a number of other towns the military cadets organised volunteers from among the ranks of the dispossessed classes, and a number of bloody encounters ensued between them and the newly-formed Red Guards in which the latter were completely victorious. At Mogilev, the seat of the Army Headquarters, a new "Government" was formed with the good wishes of the Commander-in-Chief, General Dukhonin; however, when he called on his troops to advance against the Red Guards they responded by lynching him.

It is true that there was a revolt in the Don region which for a time seemed somewhat menacing. It was led by the Chief Hetman of the Don Cossacks, Kaledin, assisted by General Kornilov. From all parts of Russia, ex-officers of the Imperial Army and members of the former wealthy classes flocked to the new standard of revolt. The Ukrainian Rada, claiming the rights of a neutral, refused permission to the Red Army to pass through its territory to the Don area.

But the situation underwent a rapid change when the Rada was superseded by a Ukrainian Soviet Government. The latter readily gave the requested permission, and soon afterwards Kaledin's Cossacks went over to the Red Army.

What little remained of the revolt was quickly liquidated. General Kornilov was killed in the course of the fighting, and the Chief Hetman, Kaledin, believing all was lost, committed suicide. In Siberia, a number of mushroom "Governments" were "proclaimed," but they were speedily swept aside by the co-operative efforts of the Local Soviets and the Red Guards.

In this connection, extracts from a series of telegrams which passed between Colonel Robins at Moscow, and Mr. Francis at Vologda, make very interesting reading :

"*Vologda, March 27, 1918.*

"*To Colonel Robins.*

"*Do you hear of any organised opposition to Soviet Government in Russia? I have not.*

"FRANCIS."

"*Moscow, March 28, 1918.*

"*To Ambassador Francis.*

"*Know of no organised opposition to Soviet Government.*

"ROBINS."

"*Moscow, April 13, 1918.*

"*To Ambassador Francis.*

"*Yesterday morning at two o'clock Soviet forces appeared simultaneously before twenty-six different bandit headquarters, demanded surrender of all weapons in five minutes. Some cases immediate surrender, others offered strong resistance machine guns from windows, bombs and small cannon. Soviet used four-inch cannon where resistance lasted beyond ten minutes. One big house blown pieces anarchists fighting from cellar until dislodged by smoke bombs. Five hundred twenty-two arrests, forty killed wounded anarchists. Soviet, three killed, fourteen wounded. Large room found packed with stolen goods, some great value. Some German machine guns new make, not elsewhere found in Russia. Number of ex-officers Russian army among prisoners. Soviet Government has now destroyed bandit organisation born in first days first revolution March, which Kerensky Government and Duma dared not attack. Moscow quiet to-day. Soviet action commended by all Press except Menshevik, which denounces Soviet for violence.*

"ROBINS."

"*Moscow, April 15, 1918.*

"*To Ambassador Francis.*

"*Complete wiping out anarchist organised force Moscow final vindication Soviet internal control. Simply repeat cumulative conclusions for five months.*

"ROBINS."

"*Moscow, April 20, 1918.*

"*To Ambassador Francis.*

"*Death Kornilov verified, this final blow organised internal force against Soviet Government.*[1]

"ROBINS."

The last cable is of paramount importance : in the considered opinion of Mr. Raymond Robins the internal opposition to the Soviet Government had received its death blow by April 20, 1918.

Meanwhile, recruiting for the Red Army was proceeding satisfactorily and at this stage British, American, French and Italian military experts were co-operating in its organisation with Trotsky, the Commissar for War.

It may be asked whether terror played any rôle in the success of the Soviet Government so far recorded. To this the Lord Emmott Report (p. 38) contains a very specific reply :

> "The *coup d'état* of October 1917, as a result of which the Soviet Government was established, by the Bolshevik or Communist Party, was not immediately followed by the inauguration of a terrorist policy. Several Ministers of the former Provisional Government were, however, arrested and imprisoned under onerous conditions in the fortress of Saints Peter and Paul, but were subsequently released after

[1] This telegram meant that the confirmed death of Kornilov had given the quietus to anti-Soviet forces in Russia.

a comparatively short period of confinement. On the other hand, several persons of military and political reputation were allowed to go their way without interference. The case of General Krasnov, who had commanded a detachment of Cossack cavalry in support of the Provisional Government against the Bolsheviks, is an example of this. He was set at liberty on giving his parole not to take part in the future in any operations against the Soviet Government. Later, however, he broke his parole and fought against the Bolsheviks in the armies of General Denikin and General Yudenitch."

On the same page the report states in heavy type that there was " no terror during the first six months of Bolshevik rule."

In passing it may be noted that during this period the Russian bourgeois Press which daily contained vehement attacks on the Soviet Government was freely permitted to appear.

From the foregoing it may be reasonably deduced that by April 1918 the civil war to all intents and purposes was at an end, and that the Soviet Government was securely established. We do not contend that there would have been no armed ebullitions against the new Government in various parts of the country, particularly in the periphery of Russia's vast domains, but we maintain that their effect in regard to the destruction of life and property would have been infinitesimal as compared with the results of the Civil War which only Allied support in funds and munitions enabled the Russian " Whites " to wage against the Soviet, quite apart from the effects produced by the direct Allied armed intervention and the blockade.

CHAPTER VII

THE GENESIS OF INTERVENTION IN NORTH RUSSIA

THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS with which we shall deal in this chapter can most easily be followed by starting right at the beginning, at the end of 1917. The representatives of the British Admiralty and Ministry of Shipping completely withdrew their ships and staffs from Archangel on December 17, 1917, leaving Mr. Douglas Young, the British Consul, in sole charge of British interests in that area, a position which he occupied until August 7, 1918. Mr. Young, because of his controlling office, was in a better position than any other representative of the British Government to appraise accurately and to speak with authority on the course of events between these dates in this part of Russia.

In February and March 1918, British naval forces were landed at Murmansk (the terminus of the Leningrad-Murmansk railway, and of the British-Russian submarine cable) under the command of Rear-Admiral Kemp, the then British senior naval officer in North Russia. At that time there was a considerable number of British subjects in Russia, and the submarine cable was the sole direct telegraphic communication between the two countries.

The first official reason vouchsafed for the landing was the fear that the port might succumb to a joint-Finnish-German attack, and be turned into a German submarine base, an unlikely occurrence, to put it temperately, because the most northern terminus of the Finnish railways is separated from Murmansk by almost impassable swamps and bogs. The German military authorities were indeed credited with the desire to link up the Finnish railway system with Murmansk,

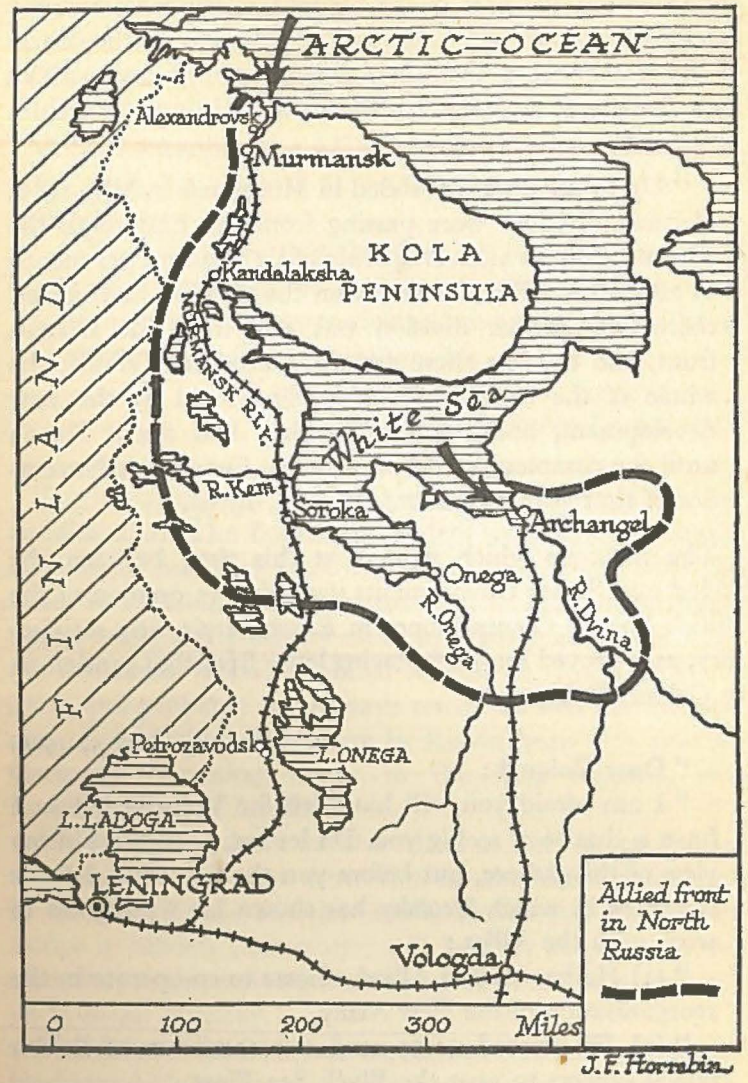
but German engineers endorsed the earlier view of Russian engineers that the task was an impossible one, and the attempt was never made.

Shortly after the British naval landing, the French and U.S.A. Governments each sent a cruiser to Murmansk and the whole of the forces were entrusted to the command of Rear-Admiral Kemp. That officer, in the course of a letter in *The Times* dated December 13, 1918, thus describes the operations :

" The landing at Murmansk was effected without opposition from the Bolshevist armed forces of the place, consisting of some 1,500 naval sailors and a few Red and Railway Guards.

" The landing party were afterwards reinforced by the arrival at Murmansk of a French and an American cruiser. These operations were regularised by a definite arrangement between the senior representatives of the Allied Powers (including the United States) and the Murman Provincial Council.

" By the arrangement in question the Allied Governments agreed to assist in the defence of Russian territory against German-Finnish invasion with all the forces they could spare for the purpose, to assist to feed the population of the Murman Province—then threatened with famine—and gave assurances that they had no annexationist aims or intention to interfere in the domestic affairs of Russia. This agreement was communicated to the Central Government at Moscow, and a reply was received from M. Trotsky, then Minister for Foreign Affairs and the head of the Soviet Government, ordering the Provincial Council to co-operate in all ways with the Allied forces for the defence of Russian territory on the lines laid down. It will thus be seen that the initial act of Allied intervention was known to and approved by the *de facto* Government of the Russian Republic."



In May 1918, more forces were landed, without any opposition on the part of the Soviet Government, and the combined operations had important reactions on the course of the war between the Allied Powers and Germany. The then Secretary of State for War, Mr. Winston Churchill, explained :

" Up to the time we landed in Murmansk in May 1918, German divisions were passing from the Eastern to the Western front at an average rate of six divisions per month to attack the Allied forces. From the time we had landed there not another division was sent from the Eastern front, and the line there remained absolutely stable, the whole of the German forces being riveted by this new development, and the anxiety they had about Russia until the complete rebuff occurred in October or November of that year " (*Hansard*, July 29, 1919).

The relations which existed at this time between the Allied and Soviet Governments were, in the opinion of the British Special Commissioner in Russia, eminently satisfactory, as is proved by the following letter from that gentleman to Colonel Robins :

" Moscow, *May 5, 1918.*

" Dear Colonel :

" I am afraid you will have left for Vologda before I have a chance of seeing you. Do let me, in support of my view of things here, put before you the following definite instances in which Trotsky has shown his willingness to work with the Allies :

" (1) He has invited Allied officers to co-operate in the reorganisation of the New Army.

" (2) He invited us to send a commission of British Naval officers to save the Black Sea Fleet.

" (3) On every occasion when we have asked him for papers and assistance for our naval officers and our evacuation officers at Petrograd he has always given us exactly what we wanted.

" (4) He has given every facility so far for Allied Co-operation at Murmansk.

" (5) He has agreed to send the Czech Corps to Murmansk and Archangel.

" (6) Finally, he has to-day come to a full agreement with us regarding the Allied stores at Archangel whereby we shall be allowed to retain those stores which we require for ourselves.

" You will agree that this does not look like the action of a pro-German agent, and that a policy of Allied intervention, with the co-operation and consent of the Bolshevik Government, is feasible and possible.

" Yours very sincerely,

" (*Signed*) R. H. Bruce Lockhart."

The last paragraph in Mr. Lockhart's letter requires some amplification. The Bolshevik Leaders were anti-Imperialist in general, but they were willing to collaborate with the Allies in resisting a German invasion of Russian territory. Lenin made this perfectly clear in a letter addressed " To the American Workers," dated August 28, 1918. All could have, and probably would have remained well had the sole aim of the Allied diplomacy in Russia been " to prevent Germany obtaining access to the food supplies, raw materials, etc., of Russia."

Unfortunately, both for the Allies as well as for Russia, the Allied Governments decided to use the Allied troops then in Northern Russia and the Czecho-Slovak and other Allied troops in Siberia (this matter will be fully discussed in our next chapter) as rallying centres for all anti-Soviet elements on Russian territory.

Towards the end of June 1918, more Allied forces were landed and Major-General Poole was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Allied forces in Northern Russia.

The Allied representatives now with larger forces, well equipped with the latest lethal weapons, by a combination of bribes and threats, compelled the Local Soviet to declare

its independence of the Central Government at Moscow and to set up the " Murman Regional Council." A few days later, on July 7, 1918, an " Agreement " was signed between, on the one hand, the " representatives of Britain, the United States, and France," and on the other hand, the " Presidium of the Murman Regional Council." One of the terms of this " Agreement " read :

> " The Allied representatives and their agents will not interfere in the home affairs of the region, but in all matters in which it may be found necessary to have the support of the local population will address themselves to the respective Russian authorities, and not directly to the population, excepting in the belt along the front, in which the orders of the military command, justified by the conditions of field service, must be obeyed unconditionally by all."

The concluding words were an open cheque to the Allied Command to do whatever they wished in every extra square mile of Soviet territory which they might occupy, an open cheque which they filled in next day.

Meanwhile, Allied troops were moving rapidly south along the Murmansk-Petrograd railway, without any consultation with the Central Soviet authorities, and on July 8, 1918, the town and port of Kem (about 250 miles south of Kola, on the western shore of the White Sea) was occupied by force of arms. The Allied representatives decided to disarm the local inhabitants, and three members of the Kem Soviet who resisted were shot. As far as can be ascertained from a careful study of the official and unofficial reports, these shot Soviet citizens were the first casualties on either side. It would, indeed, be more correct to say that the killing of the three members of the Kem Soviet constituted the first of a series of crimes committed by the Allied Governments in a futile attempt to restore the Romanovs to the throne of Russia.

Mr. Douglas Young, the British Consul at Archangel, in a letter in *The Times* of December 19, 1918, in reply to one

published six days previously by that journal from the pen of Rear-Admiral Kemp, on this incident, wrote :

> " Can he not admit that the actions of certain British representatives in Russia, with or without the knowledge and sanction of the British Government, gave the Soviet good grounds for suspecting us of deceiving them and of playing a deliberate double game ? Does he not remember the, to me, memorable afternoon of July 6, when some time between 4 and 6 p.m., in the Presidium Chamber of the Archangel Soviet, he informed them in my presence that, ' speaking for himself, and he was sure he could say the same for General Poole, he could assure them that Allied action in the White Sea *was not aimed against the Soviet Government* ' ? And has he forgotten another similar meeting a few days later, when with scowling faces the Soviet representatives communicated reports of high-handed action by the Allied military and naval forces on the western shores of the White Sea, including the shooting of three members of the Kem Soviet ? Does he deny that these reports, which were subsequently confirmed, swept away like a house of cards my attempts to reach a *modus vivendi* with the local Soviet authorities ? They at any rate were ready until the last to come to an arrangement with us on the basis of the exchange of goods, but they would not sell their birthright—their right to resist our landing except it were done ' upon their invitation'—for an Allied mess of pottage, the food of which they were in sore need."

" To this letter, Rear-Admiral Kemp replied in *The Times* on December 28, 1918 :

> " As regards the shooting of three members of the Kem Soviet, the facts are as follows : In accordance with certain military requirements, it had been mutually agreed that certain of the Russian Red or Railway Guards at Kem should surrender their arms to the Allied military authorities. The three members of the Soviet were shot while in the act of offering armed resistance to the surrender."

What was this " mutual " agreement ? The mutual agreement which existed between the Allied Command and the local inhabitants was of the same nature as the mutual agreement which existed between the notorious Dick Turpin and his victim, who with a pistol pressed against his temple " agreed " to hand over his purse.

The local authorities at Kem *did not* agree to disarmament, it was enforced on them, and three members of the Soviet who had the courage to resist paid the penalty with their lives.

Needless to say, the proceedings on the Murmansk coast, from the last week in June onwards, were followed closely and with increasing uneasiness in Moscow. When it became clear beyond doubt that the Allied aims were no longer, to put it at its mildest, primarily anti-German but anti-Soviet, the Commissar for Foreign Affairs, on June 28, 1918, sent a Note to the British Special High Commissioner, Mr. Lockhart, stating :

" The Workmen's and Peasants' Government of Russia cannot but most emphatically protest against the invasion, unprovoked by any aggressive measures on the part of Russia, by British armed troops that have just arrived in Murmansk.

" Upon the armed forces of the Russian Republic rests the duty of protecting the Murmansk District against any foreign invasion, and this duty the Soviet troops will relentingly fulfil, carrying out to the very end their revolutionary duty of guarding Soviet Russia.

" The People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs most emphatically insists that no armed forces of Great Britain or any other foreign power, should be present in Murmansk, which is a city of neutral Russia."

This Note was followed by another two days later, declaring :

" In view of the published statements in the newspaper *Nashe Slovo* of several foreign diplomats in Moscow,

which statements defined the conditions under which, according to the opinion of these diplomats, the intervention of Great Britain and her Allies in Russian affairs will be possible, the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs will be very grateful to the British diplomatic representative for an explanation as to whether or not these statements are to be construed as an expression of the true opinions of the Government of Great Britain.

" The People's Commissariat expresses the firm belief that the representative of Great Britain will repudiate all complicity in the plans of armed intervention, on the territory of the Russian Soviet Republic.

" In the name of the friendly relations, which Russia hopes to preserve and establish firmly between the peoples of Russia and Great Britain, the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs fully expects that the representative of Great Britain will announce the disagreement of his Government with the plans which are leading to the break of friendly relations, in view of the fact that absence of such repudiation cannot but be considered by the labouring people as tacit agreement with the views referred to."

Somewhat similar Notes were delivered to the representatives of the U.S.A., France, Japan, and Italy, and shortly afterwards these gentlemen, as well as their British confrère, each separately visited the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs and disassociated their Governments from any connection with or liability for the reports in *Nashe Slovo*.

After the hostile acts of the Allied Command at Kem and elsewhere, Chicherin sent the following Note (surprisingly mild in the circumstances) to Mr. Lockhart for transmission to Whitehall :

" In spite of repeated assurances by the British Government that the landing of the British troops in Murmansk is not a hostile act against the Russian Soviet Republic, the British Government has not fulfilled our elementary demand for the removal of troops from Soviet territory, but

together with French and Serbian auxiliary forces, its detachments are moving south to the interior. Soviet officials are being arrested and even sometimes shot. Railroad guards are being disarmed. Railroads and telegraphs are taken under control. After occupying Kem and Soroka, the British troops moved further east and occupied Sumski-Posad, on the road to Onega. Such actions of the British troops can be considered only as an occupation of territory of the Russian Soviet Republic. No other explanation can be given for the moving of the British troops eastward.

"The People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs declares its most solemn protest against this unjustified violation in regard to Soviet Russia. We have stated, and we are stating once more, that Soviet troops will do everything possible in order to protect Russian territory, and will offer the most determined resistance to the foreign armed invasion. We point especially to the feeling that is being developed among the wide masses of Russia by the unprovoked British invasion, and to the results which this feeling will have upon the masses in the future."

It is evident from the tone of this Note that the Soviet Government was still hoping, though with decreasing expectation, that the Allied Governments would agree to a *modus vivendi* leading to the cessation of armed intervention in Russia. Unfortunately, what shreds of this hope still remained were soon to be dissipated completely because about this date the Allied War Council at Versailles decided, under the inspiration of Tsarist *émigrés* to adopt a policy of unabashed armed intervention in Russia.

We must now consider the course of events in Archangel. As already mentioned, Mr. Douglas Young, the British Consul, was the senior British political representative in this area from December 17, 1917, to August 7, 1918, and between December 17 and August 2, 1918, there were no Allied armed forces in the district, but there were some

thousands of unarmed, Allied nationals, including British. How did the Bolshevik authorities behave towards these defenceless men, women and children? This is a pertinent question if we are to contrast honestly the policy pursued by the Allies towards the Soviet Government and vice versa.

This question was answered by Mr. Douglas Young in a letter published by *The Times* on January 6, 1919:

"As regards British residents at Archangel, I can state with authority that, so far from being at any time molested, they were accorded many privileges and exemptions to which they had no right; and I am certain that if they could speak their minds they would complain bitterly, not of the Bolshevists, but of the Allied diplomatic representatives, who themselves fled for safety to the cover of the Allied guns, leaving British men, women, and children to take their chance of emerging from the oncoming wave of intervention. We all lived for months under the dread of mob violence at German instigation, but I never at any time feared outrage by or with the sanction of the responsible Soviet authorities, so long as neutrality was observed; and I am glad of an opportunity of stating that I found the Soviet representatives at all times far more accessible and responsive to reasonable demands than the discourteous and overbearing officials who so often represented the Imperial Russian Government."

So much for the Soviet authorities. What of the Allies? Part of the answer was given at Archangel on August 2, 1918. On this date the Allies by force of arms occupied the port and town. The occupation on the authority of a *Daily Telegraph* cable from Archangel was "practically bloodless." Why? Mr. Young explained in the letter from which we quoted above:

"The Allied military force which embarked upon this crazy adventure, and was to be the signal for the collapse of the Soviet Government throughout Russia, was, indeed,

miserably inadequate to achieve anything more than a local and temporary success; and it was saved from initial disaster only by good luck in the matter of weather conditions, and by the fact that it arrived before it was expected and during the absence in Moscow of the Bolshevist leader. The Soviet troops evacuated Archangel in a momentary panic, due in the first place to the fact that their organisation was honeycombed in the upper and technical grades by Russian officers who took service with them with the intention either of deliberately betraying their cause or of jumping with the cat. In the second place it was due to the unexpected arrival of Allied bombing aeroplanes against which they had no defence. They speedily stiffened, however, and within a week of the landing held up the Allied advance at an inconsiderable distance south of Archangel, approximately where they now remain, if winter conditions have not forced them back on Archangel."

On the day before the Allied occupation of Archangel, the Allied diplomatic representatives arrived in that city from Vologda without molestation. Immediately after the withdrawal of the Soviet forces from Archangel, the Russian "Whites," who had been in secret touch with the Allies, being assured that they could rely on the batteries of the latter should the local citizens be so presumptuous as to have ideas of their own on the subject of the form of Government under which they wished to live, proclaimed the establishment of a new Government. This they called the "Republican Government of the North." It contained, among others, some members of the disbanded Constituent Assembly under the presidency of Tchaikovsky.

Needless to say this occupation of Archangel by violence was followed by a wave of intense indignation against the Allied Governments throughout Russia and a number of Allied citizens, including British, were placed under arrest. In view of the fact that the policy of the Soviet Government

after August 2, 1918, towards the British was made the theme of much denunciation in the columns of certain organs of our Press, it is of importance to recall that prior to August 2, 1918, British subjects had been unmolested in Russia. Mr. Douglas Young averred :

> " . . . according to a statement published in an Anglo-Russian paper in London and attributed to Mr. Lockhart's own secretary, the position of the British even in Moscow ' was not made uncomfortable until August 4,' two days *after* that occupation" (*The Times*, December 19, 1918).

Six days after the occupation of Archangel the British Government through its representatives at Vladivostok, Murmansk, and Archangel issued the following declaration to the Russian people :

> " Your allies have not forgotten you. We remember all the services your heroic army rendered us in the early years of the war. We are coming as friends to help you save yourselves from dismemberment and destruction at the hands of Germany, which is trying to enslave your people and use the great resources of your country to its own ends.
>
> " We wish to solemnly assure you that while our troops are entering Russia to assist you in your struggle against Germany, we shall not retain one foot of your territory. We deplore the civil war that divides you and the internal dissensions that facilitate Germany's plans of conquest.
>
> " The destinies of Russia are in the hands of the Russian peoples. It is for them alone to decide their form of government and to find a solution for their social problems.
>
> " Peoples of Russia, your very existence as an independent nation is at stake. The liberties you have won in the revolution are threatened with extinction by the iron hand of Germany. Rally around the banner of freedom and independence that we, who are still your allies, are raising in your midst, and secure the triumphs of those two

great principles without which there can be no lasting peace or real liberty for the world. . . .

" We wish to aid in the development of the industrial and natural resources of your country, not with a view to exploiting them for our own benefit. We desire, too, to restore the exchange of commodities, to stimulate agriculture, and to enable you to take your rightful place among the free nations of the world. Our one desire is to see Russia strong and free, and then to retire to watch the Russian people work out their own destinies."

Similar proclamations were also issued by the representatives of the other Allied Governments. It was apparently felt that these declarations were not sufficiently explicit, and on August 9, 1918, Mr. Francis, the U.S.A. Ambassador, issued a supplementary promulgation to the Russian people " approved and signed by the Diplomatic Corps " avowing :

" While considering you as allies against a common enemy of the Governments and the peoples whom we represent, we have no intention of interfering in your internal affairs. We hold to the belief that all civilised peoples have the right themselves to determine their own form of Government."

These declarations, solemnly expressed, in view of what had already transpired at Archangel, were surely worthy of Mark Twain at his best, and read to-day, when taken in conjunction with subsequent occurrences, like a combination of mendacity and cynicism worthy of Antisthenes himself.

The policy of His Majesty's Government was the subject of a number of questions in the House of Commons on August 4, 1918, and the Foreign Secretary, Mr. A. J. Balfour, replied to Mr. King :

" ' The aim of His Majesty's Government is to secure the political and economic restoration of Russia, without internal interference of any kind, and to bring about the expulsion of enemy forces from Russian soil. His Majesty's Government categorically declare that they have no intention whatever of infringing in the slightest degree the territorial integrity of Russia.' I have no doubt that this is in harmony with the view of all the associated Governments."

Mr. Philip Snowden, not satisfied with the Foreign Secretary's reply, asked :

" Are we to understand that His Majesty's Government and the Allies think that the best way to promote the political restoration of Russia is to accentuate the civil war there? "

Mr. Balfour replied :

" No, Sir. I made it perfectly clear in what I said. We do not propose to interfere with the internal arrangements of Russia. She must manage her own affairs. There is nothing inconsistent with that general statement in anything I have said."

In the meantime, as we pointed out above, a " Republican Government of the North " had been established.

The history of this Government together with its army (trained and equipped by the Allies) from August 2, 1918, until this Government vanished into thin air, would seem to belong more to the realm of comic opera than to the annals of sober fact.

Although, according to its own declaration, " The Republican Government of the North " relied " for support on all classes," it soon found that actually it had to repose " for support " on Allied batteries. The Grand Duke Michael descended on Archangel and on the night of September 5, 1918, Tsarist officers arrested and expelled all the members of the Government on whom they could lay hands " and proclaimed a military rule till peace was restored " (*Daily Telegraph*, September 23, 1918).

The workers and others immediately responded with hostile demonstrations and strikes. The Allied representatives became frightened and intervened.

A message dated "Archangel, September 8," 1918, tells us what happened next :

> "To-day the Allies issued a proclamation declaring that the Allies had had no share in the arrest of the Government, expressing their disapproval of all violence, stating that they had taken steps to secure the return of the arrested members, expressing the hope that some understanding would be reached which would prevent similar occurrences in future, and calling upon the inhabitants to remain quiet as the Allies would not permit any attempts to deprive them of liberty. The town is, in fact, quiet, and there is very little excitement as the members of the Government do not enjoy the confidence of the majority of the population, owing to their incapacity to deal effectively with military and other matters" (*Daily Telegraph*, September 23, 1918).

When the armistice was signed in November 1918 between the Allied Governments and the Central Powers, the Allied forces in Northern Russia were in occupation of the Murmansk Coast, Kem and Archangel. They were held up by Soviet forces some short distance south of Kem and Archangel. The relative positions of the opposing sides had altered scarcely, if at all, after the end of the first week in August 1918. Tchaikovsky's Government was still in the saddle because the Allied forces on the one hand kept the Tsarist officers in check, and on the other, prevented the working population from restoring the Soviet institutions.

We shall return in a later chapter to the course of events in Northern Russia from the date of the signature of the Western European Armistice to the complete winding up of this sorry business, but before concluding this chapter we

cannot but make one further reference to Mr. Douglas Young.

Mr. Young's analysis and prognostications were completely justified by subsequent developments.

He left the Consular Service in October 1919 and did not re-enter it until August 1924.

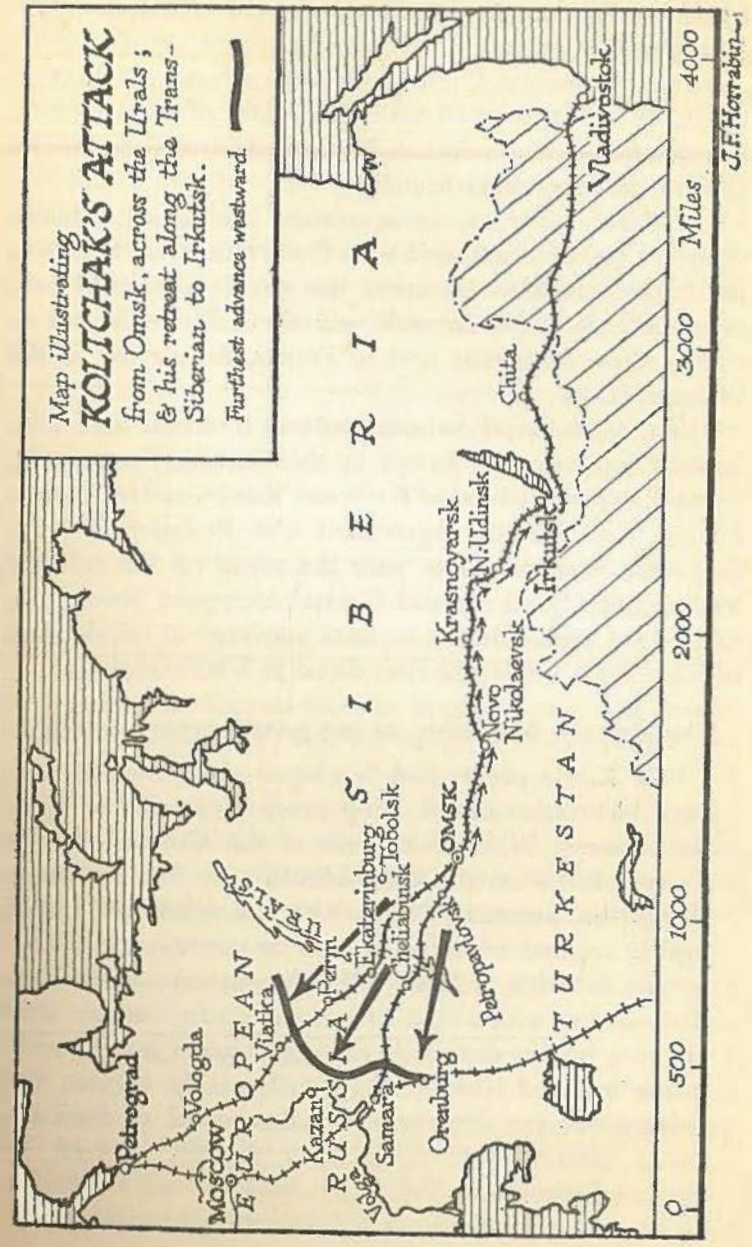
CHAPTER VIII

THE GENESIS OF INTERVENTION IN SIBERIA

ALMOST IMMEDIATELY after the outbreak of the European War, it became quite evident that war against Russia was exceedingly unpopular among the Slavs of Bohemia, Moravia and Slovakia. The conscripts of these provinces of the then Austro-Hungarian Empire, when being entrained for the eastern front were, in many cases, forced into the railways carriages actually at the bayonet point. Often when facing the Russian forces, at an agreed signal whole regiments deserted to the Muscovites. In all about 300,000 deserted in this way. Strange to relate, these deserters were not at first welcomed very warmly by the representatives of the Tsarist Government. The latter knew that among the rank and file were large numbers of social-democrats and the Autocracy feared the spread of socialist ideas among its own subjects.

After the March Revolution (March, 1917), Professor Masaryk, President of the Czecho-Slovak National Council, appealed to the Provisional Government for permission to organise a distinct Czecho-Slovak army from among the Bohemians, Moravians and Slovakians scattered throughout the war-prisoners' camps of Russia. The request was granted. At first a brigade was recruited, then an Army Corps and, finally, a small army 50,000 strong.

Meanwhile, the Allies had declared that one of their war aims was the freeing of the Czechs and the Slovaks from Austrian rule. Naturally, under the circumstances, the main pre-occupation of the newly formed army was the defeat of the Central Powers, otherwise they would never be able to



return to their native lands. The Czecho-Slovaks fought side-by-side with the Russian Army in the ill-fated "July Offensive" of 1917.

As can be imagined, the Czecho-Slovak contingents were anything but enamoured with the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, but despite this fact relations between them and the Soviet Government remained friendly.

On March 26, 1918, an agreement was signed between Professor Masaryk and the Soviet Government, under which the latter agreed to transport the 50,000 Czecho-Slovaks across Siberia to Vladivostok, and the Allies undertook to convey them from that port to France, for service on the Western Front.

The Czecho-Slovak prisoners of war in Russia had been kept in concentration camps in the Central, Eastern and South-Eastern provinces of European Russia, and of Western Siberia, and after the Agreement with Professor Masaryk they were mustered at or near the towns on the railways leading from Southern and Central European Russia, via Siberia to Omsk. These two lines converge at Omsk, from which point a single line runs direct to Vladivostok.

The German Militarists, as one would expect, growled :

> "In Russia events had developed along lines of their own, illustrative of the lying propensities of the Soviet Government. With the consent of this Government the Entente had formed Czecho-Slovak units out of Austro-Hungarian prisoners. These were intended to be used against us, and were therefore to be conveyed to France by the Siberian railway. All this was sanctioned by a Government with whom we were at peace, and we actually took it lying down ! At the beginning of June, I wrote to the Imperial Chancellor specially on the subject, and pointed out the dangers which threatened us from the Soviet Government" (*My War Memories, 1914–18*, by General Ludendorff, Vol. II., p. 654).

However, despite the angry snarls of Ludendorff, the Soviet faithfully kept to its side of the bargain with the Allies. In this matter Moscow had taken on no small task because of the disorganised state of its transport system, coupled with the serious food situation. As a matter of fact, at this time the Siberian railways were of vital importance to Central and Northern Russia for the transport of food supplies. Part of the Ukraine was in German hands ; at the same time it was also the theatre of civil war between, on the one hand, the Ukrainian Workers' and Peasants' Soviets, and on the other, the forces of Germany and the Ukrainian Rada.

The Czecho-Slovaks agreed to surrender their arms but were permitted to retain ten rifles and one machine-gun per hundred soldiers, so as to be in a position to defend themselves against possible bandit attacks on the long journey across Siberia.

From the very beginning, there was some distrust between the Soviet Government and the Czecho-Slovak High Command. The former feared that the latter might be used as a rallying centre for counter-revolutionary forces within Russia, and the Czecho-Slovaks, impatient to get to France, were apprehensive lest Moscow should intern and hold them as prisoners of war till the end of hostilities.

The Allies now took a step which immeasurably increased suspicion through Russia. Great Britain and Japan, with the consent of other Allies, landed forces in Vladivostok, the port to which the Czecho-Slovak forces were proceeding.

The Japanese excuse was the time-honoured one which big nations advance when they have decided to intervene in the internal affairs of other nations—that the lives of their nationals resident there were in danger.

It is true that some disturbances had taken place in Vladivostok, disturbances against which no Government can give guarantees, but the Soviet local and national authorities averred that they were quite capable of maintaining law and order and that the presence of foreign armed

forces would increase excitement and distrust, thus aggravating and not lessening the danger of disturbances.

The Central Executive Committee for Siberia transmitted the following message to Vladivostok for the guidance of the local authorities :

" The Central Executive Committee for Siberia protests against the Japanese landing at Vladivostok as by no means justified by the insignificant incidents in question, which are such as may happen at any time. The workmen and peasants of Siberia will organise a vigorous resistance to any attempt on the part of the Japanese Imperialists to seize any district of Siberia. The protection of foreign subjects is the task of the local Soviet, which possesses all the means necessary for its fulfilment. Japanese intervention can in no way contribute to the establishment of order and security, and even at the best it is superfluous and useless. The Siberian workmen and peasants will do anything to prevent the counter-revolution from accomplishing its disintegrating work of betraying the interests of the proletariat. The counter-revolution will be mercilessly crushed. Martial law is declared throughout the whole of Siberia, and the Revolutionary staffs are to organise the defence of the Revolution against Imperialist invasion.—Reuter " (*Daily Telegraph*, April 9, 1918).

The effect produced in the Soviet capital by the report of the Japanese-British landing is thus described by the *Daily Telegraph's* Correspondent :

" On the receipt of the news of the landing of Japanese and British forces at Vladivostok the representatives here of Great Britain, France and the United States were invited to the offices of the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs. M. Chicherin, the Acting Commissary, protested against the invasion of the territory of the republic by foreign troops, and expressed his regret that the Powers had tolerated such an invasion. He declared that this occurrence was producing an unfavourable effect which would be reflected in the relations of the Russian Republic and the Entente Powers. The only solution of the situation was the immediate removal of the detachments that had been landed.

" The representatives of the Entente promised to convey these declarations to their Governments, at the same time giving an assurance that the landing at Vladivostok was an affair that had only a purely local significance. The French representative described the action taken by the Japanese as a police measure.

" The United States representative—according to the Russian semi-official account of the proceedings—declared that his Government was opposed to the Japanese action.

" The British representative said that, according to all the information at his disposal, foreign intervention would be contrary to the intentions of the British Government, and the landing at Vladivostok was, in his view, the result of local complications.

" All the Entente representatives declared that the conflict that had arisen could soon be settled.

" A message from Vladivostok states that Admiral Kato has called upon the mayor of the town, and informed him that the landing of Japanese troops had been forced upon him by the state of anarchy and crime prevailing in the town. The mayor vigorously protested against the landing. Further naval detachments were landed to-day " (*Daily Telegraph*, April 9, 1918).

The whole of the anti-Bolshevik Press in Russia protested as vehemently as the Soviet Government against the landing at Vladivostok. More significant still, the Japanese Ambassador to Russia expressed opposition to intervention in Siberia :

" Tokyo, Japan (Correspondence of the Associated Press).—Those in Japan who favour Japanese intervention in Siberia found no encouragement in the words of

Viscount Yasuya Uchida, former Ambassador at Washington, who on his return here from his post as Ambassador to Russia, expressed doubt as to the wisdom of entering Siberia at this time. His conviction was that Bolshevism to-day represented the thought of a great majority of Russian people."

Under all these circumstances, it would have been difficult to blame the Soviet authorities had they regarded the action of the Allies in regard to Vladivostok as absolving them (the Soviets) from their agreement with the Czecho-Slovaks, but despite the deepening suspicions, which the provocative actions of the Allies were creating in Russia, the Soviets continued to observe loyally their side of the compact.

Meanwhile, the transporting of the Czecho-Slovaks to Vladivostok continued. The first contingent reached that port on April 4, 1918, and by May 31, 12,000 troops had been conveyed to Vladivostok.

However, a great surprise was awaiting these forces when they reached the Siberian port : the Allied Governments had not supplied the necessary transports for conveying them to the western front. On the other hand, the Allies, owing to the presence of British and Japanese forces which in the interim had been considerably augmented, were now in a position to equip the newly arrived Czecho-Slovaks with the latest lethal weapons. It should be observed that by May 31, 1918, some of these contingents had been fifty-seven days in Vladivostok and not a single Allied transport had yet arrived in the port.

Along the extensive railway lines from Penza and Kazan, via Omsk to Vladivostok, clashes involving loss of life had occurred between the Soviet and Czecho-Slovak forces. A variety of factors were responsible for these regrettable episodes. Each side was daily growing more profoundly suspicious of the other. The Czecho-Slovaks were anxious to reach Vladivostok as speedily as the difficulties of transport would permit ; the Soviet authorities daily scanned with growing disquiet the horizon from Vladivostok for the

transports which never arrived. The wires along the 5,000 miles of line were frequently severed by " White " officers who had taken to banditry, and as a consequence communications between the battalions were often impossible. In such an atmosphere it was natural that the wildest rumours should often gain credence.

The Czecho-Slovaks, as soon became evident, had hidden considerable quantities of arms which, in the midst of an unarmed population, could easily make them masters of the situation, a fact which, when discovered, naturally increased the tension between the two sides.

This breach of faith on the part of the Czecho-Slovaks is not open to question, it was afterwards openly boasted of by some of their officers. For instance, a Czecho-Slovak officer contributed a series of articles to the *Daily Telegraph* in April and May 1919, on the history of the Czecho-Slovak army in Russia, in the course of which he wrote :

> " The order [to hand over the greater part of their arms] was anything but popular with our men. They succeeded in evading it to a large extent. They hid their rifles where they could, under the cars, and in partitions which they made inside the cars, where they stored any number of rifles, cartridges, and hand-grenades. The superfluous rifles and ammunition were then handed over to the Bolsheviks " (*Daily Telegraph*, May 27, 1919).

It is necessary to explain here that members of the Czecho-Slovak National Council travelled with some of the echelons, the latter being guided in the main by these members. Some of the members honourably kept their bond with the Soviet authorities, others acted as mere cat's-paws of the Allied diplomatists who were determined to keep the Czecho-Slovak troops in Russia.

The officer from whom we quoted above relates how some of the troops, acting on the instructions of the members of the National Council, behaved whilst the forces were being transported to Vladivostok. He states :

"Our soldiers did wonderful work, disguising themselves as Red Guards, mixing with the Bolsheviks, and finding out all about the emplacement of the base depôts, the ammunition depôts, and the provision centres. The information was afterwards of use to our commanders, who were thus able to occupy them when necessary."

From all this it is evident that some members of the Czecho-Slovak "National Council" had made up their minds to keep their troops in Russia, and would not show their hand until the opportune moment arrived.

In the tense atmosphere existing towards the end of May 1918, the striking of a match could cause an explosion. That match was struck at Cheliabinsk (in the Southern Urals) on May 26, 1918. At the railway station some Czecho-Slovaks moving east and some German prisoners of war moving west met; an exchange of compliments between the two par es was followed by a bloody affray in which lives were lost. The Russians intervened to restore order, and earned the reward of most arbitrators; they were accused by each side of being partial to the other. However, the episode gave the venal members of the Czecho-Slovak National Council the opportunity for which they had been scheming and on the night of May 26, 1918, the Czecho-Slovak forces, by stratagem, took possession of Cheliabinsk. The Czecho-Slovak officer from whom we have quoted above thus describes what occurred:

"The troops were got ready during the night, and at 4 o'clock they surrounded each of the three barracks. They fired a salvo into the windows, which startled the Bolshevik troops from their sleep. The Bolsheviks jumped out of their beds and appeared at the windows, making signs of surrender. In a quarter of an hour all three barracks were in our possession, and the whole Bolshevik garrison was taken prisoner and disarmed. We next took possession of the town of Cheliabinsk, which has about 70,000 inhabitants" (*Daily Telegraph*, May 27, 1919).

From Cheliabinsk the Czecho-Slovak commanders were able to get into telegraphic communication with their echelons to the north-east and west of that town, with the result that within a week Penza, Samara, Novo-Nicolaievsk, Omsk, and other cities were captured by the Czecho-Slovak forces.

The Czecho-Slovak officer, from whom we have already quoted several times, relates:

"Most of our echelons had received their orders before Moscow was aware of what was happening. Only a few of our echelons were attacked by the Bolsheviks before they got information from our messengers, and in each case they defended themselves successfully.

"During the week that marked the end of May 1918, and the beginning of June, we captured the greater part of the stations in the region of the Volga through which our echelons had to pass. They took possession either by force or stratagem as the case required."

It is not the purpose of this history to discuss the relative fighting qualities of the Czecho-Slovaks and the Russians, but it may be suggested that the temporary military triumph of the former was not a remarkable achievement as they were in the midst of an unarmed population and the Soviet Government was exceedingly anxious to avoid a quarrel with the Allied Governments regarding them; further, when the Russian and Czecho-Slovak forces met on equal terms in the autumn of 1919, the laurels were rapidly swept from the brows of the latter.

As already mentioned, some members of the Czecho-Slovak National Council were sincerely desirous of keeping their pledge with the Soviet Government, and did not wish to see their forces used as a pawn in the game for the restoration of Tsardom. On May 30, 1918, the following message, with the approval of the local Soviet, was wired from Vladivostok to all the Czecho-Slovak echelons in Russia over the

names of three members of the Czecho-Slovak National Council : Messieurs Girza, Hurban, and Housk :

" In the name of the Czecho-Slovak National Council we transmit to you the following : Your departure from Vladivostok is assured and is delayed solely by technical reasons, i.e., by the absence till now of ships. There are already 12,000 of us here in excellent surroundings and impatiently awaiting your arrival. The local Soviet authority supports us in every manner, and we are full loyal and friendly to it. Any use of force on your part en route only delays travel and threatens the gravest complications. Therefore we urgently insist that all clashes immediately cease, that complete order be maintained, that under no circumstances do you respond to any provocation, no matter whence it comes, that you enter at once into an agreement with the Soviet Government on condition that your immediate further travel is assured. The question of arms has no importance for you. The quantity of arms—thirty rifles, revolvers, and sabres—left you by the Siberian Soviet we consider sufficient for assuring your personal safety to Vladivostok assuming a conscientious attitude on the part of the authorities and the presence of a Soviet commissary in every echelon. From Karuimskaya to Vladivostok the road is absolutely safe. The plan of sending the first division to Archangel was proposed by the Allies because of transportation considerations. In order to achieve your movement we here are putting forth every effort. Do not jeopardize it by using force ; do not forget your aim, we can only attain it by firmness and patience. Once more we demand : immediately abandon the conflicts as only in such case is your further movement possible."

We would underline the words with which the message opens : " *Your departure from Vladivostok is assured and is delayed solely by technical reasons, i.e., by the absence of . . . ships.*" The first contingents had already been in Vladivostok no

less than fifty-seven days and the first transport for conveying them to Europe had not yet appeared. In view of these facts is it a matter for genuine surprise that the Siberians were at this time petitioning Moscow to delay the sending of further echelons to Vladivostok until those already there were on the high seas ?

After the events at Cheliabinsk, the Soviet decided that in justice to their own people they would have to insist on the complete disarmament of the Czecho-Slovak forces. Would any Government, in view of what had occurred, have acted differently? Would any British Government permit hostile forces, which had taken possession of railway stations and towns and had shot down its citizens in the process, to pass armed through its territories? In parliamentary terms, the answer is in the negative, doubly emphasised.

On June 4, 1918, the British, French, Italian, and U.S.A. diplomatic representatives in Russia informed the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs that their Governments would regard the disarming of the Czecho-Slovak forces as an unfriendly act—a proceeding surely unparalleled in the whole annals of diplomacy. Whether or not the protests of the Allied diplomats were intended to stimulate the disloyal among the members of the Czecho-Slovak National Council to still greater acts of provocation against the Soviet Government, they certainly had that effect and relations between the two sides rapidly went from bad to worse.

Along the entire stretch of railway lines from the Eastern provinces of European Russia to the Yellow Sea, the Czecho-Slovak troops took possession of the stations and towns. By this date, these forces had increased to a strength of 120,000 men, many of their compatriots from the war-prisoner camps having flocked to their banner on the long journey to Vladivostok.

Up to the evening of June 28, 1918, relations between the Soviet authorities and the members of the Czecho-Slovak National Council in Vladivostok had remained friendly.

Suddenly, on the following day, a combined force of Czecho-Slovaks, British, Japanese, and Russian "Whites," greatly outnumbering the Soviet troops, took possession of the port and town, disarmed the Bolshevik forces, and suppressed the local Government. The Czecho-Slovaks were now in virtual control of the railway from Vladivostok to Penza, the latter being within 300 miles of Moscow.

Within a month the relations between the Czecho-Slovaks and the Soviet Government had undergone a complete volte-face. Why? It is true, as already mentioned, that towards the end of May 1918 relations between the two sides were anything but cordial, but there is a world of difference between strained relations and open warfare. The answer is given by Professor H. K. Norton (an American, who spent many months in Siberia, investigating the history of this period) in his *Far Eastern Republic of Siberia.* He states :

> "The explanation offered, and . . . universally believed by the Siberians, is that the Czechs were prevailed upon by the Allies under the urgence of France, to attack the Russians from the rear in return for recognition and assistance. This hypothesis covers all the circumstances already mentioned, and receives additional support from the later action of the Allies. France recognised the Czecho-Slovak Republic on June 30. Great Britain followed on August 13. The United States granted recognition on September 2, and Japan on September 9. At any rate, the Czechs were now making war on the Soviet Government, and it can hardly be doubted that their action was due to Allied influence" (p. 68).

Another American writer, Professor E. A. Ross, who also spent much time in Russia collecting material, wrote in his book *The Russian Soviet Republic*, on p. 135 :

> "It is certain that on the train which bore the American Red Cross Mission across Siberia in May there were Frenchmen who at every station where there were Czecho-Slovaks held long and confidential colloquies with the officers. They had opportunity to fill the Czechs with distrust of the Soviets, just as the German and Austrian internationalists who hated them as traitors to Austria had opportunity to plant suspicion of the Czechs in the minds of the Sovietists."

These strictures are underlined by Mr. Bruce Lockhart. He wrote :

> "But for the folly of the French I am convinced that the Czechs would have been evacuated without incident. How I wish to-day that President Mazaryk had remained in Russia during this trying period. I am convinced that he would never have sanctioned the Siberian revolt" (*Memoirs of a British Agent*, p. 272).

Documents which fell into the hands of the Soviet authorities when the Czecho-Slovak troops were evacuating Siberian towns in the following year prove that the leaders of these forces were heavily bribed by the representatives of Britain and France to act as they did.

The possession of Vladivostok placed the Czecho-Slovaks in a very strong position : they would now have been able, had they so desired, to assemble the whole of their forces in that port as rapidly as the conditions of transport would allow. The Czecho-Slovak officer (from whose contributions in the *Daily Telegraph* we have already quoted several times) on this point states :

> "Although with the occupation of Vladivostok our 'retreat' should have properly speaking begun, we had then conquered our freedom of movement along the whole Siberian line, yet curiously enough it may be said that thereby our 'retreat' virtually ended. Other tasks were given us. The positions we had so gallantly taken for our self-protection we were told and begged by the Allies to hold, and even, if possible, to extend."

It is clear from this candid, one might almost say cynical, statement, that after the capture of Vladivostok the Allied Governments, without any difficulty, could have evacuated the whole of the Czecho-Slovak forces from Siberia, had they not had very different intentions. These designs soon took concrete shape. On July 12, 1918, the Czecho-Slovak troops in Vladivostok, who had been impatiently awaiting there the arrival of Allied transports to convey them to Europe, were suddenly ordered by their commanders to entrain again, *this time for Central Siberia.*

A fortnight later, on July 27, 1918, the Czecho-Slovak National Council in New York published the following official declaration :

"The question, however, of staying in Russia, or getting out does not depend on the Czecho-Slovaks alone. That is something which must be decided by the Allies. The Czecho-Slovak Army is one of the Allied Armies, and it is as much under the orders of the Versailles War Council as the French or American Army. No doubt the Czecho-Slovak boys in Russia are anxious to avoid participation in a possible civil war in Russia, but they realise at the same time that by staying where they are they may be able to render far greater services, both to Russia and the allied cause, than if they were transported to France. They are at the orders of the Supreme War Council of the Allies."

As already mentioned in the extract from Professor Norton's book, the French Government had recognised the Czecho-Slovak Republic on June 30, 1918, but other Governments had not as yet followed suit. It would seem that the action of the Czecho-Slovak commanders at Vladivostok on July 12, coupled with the official statement issued in New York on July 27, 1918, constituted part of the price which the Czecho-Slovak National Council were to pay, or were compelled to pay, for the recognition of their Republic by the other Allied Governments. The independence of

Czecho-Slovakia, very desirable in itself, was to be purchased at the price of the restoration of Tsardom in Russia !

A few days later, the Allied Governments moved briskly, and in the first two weeks of August 1918, additional forces, including on this occasion not only British and Japanese, but also French and U.S.A., were landed at Vladivostok.

One after another, the four Governments issued declarations addressed to the Russian people.

The Japanese proclamation, dated "Tokio, August 3, 1918," read :

"The Japanese Government, actuated by sentiments of sincere friendship toward the Russian people, has always entertained the most sanguine hope for the speedy re-establishment of order in Russia, and a healthy and untrammelled development of her national life. . . .

"The Czecho-Slovak troops, aspiring to secure a free and independent existence for their race, and loyally espousing the common cause of the Allies, justly command every sympathy and consideration from the co-belligerents, to whom their destiny is a matter of deep and abiding concern. In the presence of the threatening danger to which the Czecho-Slovak troops are actually exposed in Siberia at the hands of the Germans and Austro-Hungarians, the Allies have naturally felt themselves unable to view with indifference the course of events, and a certain number of their troops have already been ordered to proceed to Vladivostok. . . .

"A certain number of troops will be sent forthwith to Vladivostok. In adopting this course the Japanese Government remains unshaken in its constant desire to promote relations of enduring friendship with Russia and the Russian people, and it re-affirms its avowed policy of respecting the territorial integrity of Russia and of abstaining from all interference in her internal politics. It further declares that upon the realisation of the objects

mentioned, it will immediately withdraw all Japanese troops from Russian territory."

The U.S.A. declaration, dated "Washington, August 3, 1918," stated :

"In the judgment of the Government of the United States—a judgment arrived at after repeated and very searching consideration of the whole situation—military intervention in Russia would be more likely to add to the present sad confusion there than to cure it, and would injure Russia, rather than help her out of her distresses. Such military intervention as has been most frequently proposed, even supposing it to be efficacious in its immediate object of delivering an attack upon Germany from the east, would, in its judgment, be more likely to turn out to be merely a method of making use of Russia than to be a method of serving her. Her people, if they profited by it at all, could not profit by it in time to deliver them from their present desperate difficulties, and their substance would meantime be used to maintain foreign armies, not to reconstitute their own or to feed their own men, women and children. We are bending all our energies now to the purpose, the resolute and confident purpose, of winning on the western front, and it would, in the judgment of the Government of the United States, be most unwise to divide or dissipate our forces.

"As the Government of the United States sees the present circumstances, therefore, military action is admissible in Russia now only to render such protection and help as is possible to the Czecho-Slovaks against the armed Austrian and German prisoners who are attacking them, and to steady any efforts at self-government or self-defence in which the Russians themselves may be willing to accept assistance. Whether from Vladivostock or from Murmansk and Archangel, the only present object for which American troops will be employed will be to guard military stores which may subsequently be needed by

Russian forces and to render such aid as may be acceptable to the Russians in the organisation of their own self-defence.

"With such objects in view, the Government of the United States is now co-operating with the Governments of France and Great Britain in the neighbourhood of Murmansk and Archangel. The United States and Japan are the only powers which are just now in a position to act in Siberia in sufficient force to accomplish even such modest objects as those that have been outlined. The Government of the United States has, therefore, proposed to the Government of Japan that each of the two Governments send a force of a few thousand men to Vladivostok, with the purpose of co-operating as a single force in the occupation of Vladivostok and in safeguarding, as far as it may be, the country to the rear of the westward-moving Czecho-Slovaks, and the Japanese Government has consented.

"In taking this action the Government of the United States wishes to announce to the people of Russia in the most public and solemn manner that it contemplates no interference in her internal affairs—not even in the local affairs of the limited areas which her military force may be obliged to occupy—and no impairment of her territorial integrity, either now or hereafter, but that what we are about to do has as its single and only object the rendering of such aid as shall be acceptable to the Russian people themselves in their endeavours to regain control of their own affairs, their own territory, and their own destiny. The Japanese Government, it is understood, will issue a similar assurance.

"These plans and purposes of the Government of the United States have been communicated to the Governments of Great Britain, France, and Italy, and those Governments have advised the Department of State that they assent to them in principle."

The British proclamation dated "London, August 8, 1918," and signed by Lord Balfour, the Foreign Secretary, averred :

"Your allies have not forgotten you. We remember all the services your heroic army rendered us in the early years of the war. We are coming as friends to help you save yourselves from dismemberment and destruction at the hands of Germany, which is trying to enslave your people and use the great resources of your country to its own ends.

"We wish to solemnly assure you that while our troops are entering Russia to assist you in your struggle against Germany we shall not retain one foot of your territory. We deplore the civil war that divides you and the internal dissensions that facilitate Germany's plans of conquest, but we have no intention to impose any political system upon Russia. . . ."

We quote this proclamation *in extenso* on pp. 93–4.

The French declaration dated "Paris, September 19, 1918," read :

"The close friendship which has bound so long France and Russia still lives in the hearts of the people of both nations. France knows the heroism of the Russian soldiers who shed a great deal of their blood on the battlefields, and remembering their military accomplishments during the first years of the war, faithfully believes in the regeneration and the military future of the Russian Army.

"The direct cause of our action is the necessity to give aid to our ally, the Czecho-Slovaks.

"We guarantee most categorically and with absolute certainty the respect of the independence and sovereignty of the Russian people and their territorial integrity."

The four Notes suggest two pertinent questions. Did the Allied Governments intend observing the principle of non-intervention ? Were the Czecho-Slovaks in danger from German-Austrian prisoners of war ?

As regards the first query—the Allies violated the pledge even before they actually gave it by the combined Anglo-Japanese-Czecho-Slovak-"White"-Guard suppression of the local Soviet Government at Vladivostok on June 29, 1918, to say nothing of what happened at Archangel on August 1 and 2, 1918.

Respecting the second question—it is more than amazing that the refuted falsehood regarding the danger threatening the Czecho-Slovaks should again have been advanced at this juncture. As far back as March 19, 1918, Mr. W. L. Hicks (Captain of the British Mission in Moscow) and Mr. William B. Webster (Captain and Attaché, American Red Cross Mission to Russia) left Moscow for Siberia to investigate the rumours, sedulously circulated by Russian "Whites," to the effect that the Soviet authorities were arming hundreds of thousands of German-Austrian prisoners of war for use against the Allies. The two officers returned to the Russian capital and on April 26, 1918, issued an Official Report from which we take the following excerpts :

"The Soviets stated that before any prisoners could join the Revolutionary Red Guard they must be Socialists of standing, vouched for personally by three responsible Russians, and after a period of six months, having renounced their old allegiance, become citizens of the Federated Russian Republic. The Central All-Siberian Soviet, at Irkutsk, stated that naturally such a number was limited and that they would guarantee that not more than fifteen hundred prisoners of war would be armed in all Siberia ; also that they would never be allowed to act as an independent military command, would always be under the control and command of Russian Socialists, and that to satisfy any feeling of security which the Allies might deem necessary they would be glad to permit any American and English Mission to make investigations to see that such guarantee was fulfilled, or in their absence to permit the American and the English Consuls in

Siberia to do the work. They submitted this guarantee to writing and a translation thereof is enclosed for reference (April 2nd, 1918, No. 253. Irkutsk). The Omsk Soviet affirmed this guarantee and stated that they did not intend to arm more than one thousand men from their district, including those already armed, which affirmation they also submitted to writing.

" We can well say that we found all the Soviet authorities with whom we came in contact sincere and bright men, good leaders, thorough partisans of their party, and seeming in all cases to well represent the cause for which the Soviet Government stands. We feel, therefore, that their assurances to us concerning the limitation in regard to the arming of prisoners is a statement upon which faith and confidence can be based. The Soviets have both the power and the inclination to carry out this guarantee.

" *We can but add, after seeing the armed prisoners and the type of men which they are, that we feel there is no danger to the Allied cause through them.*"

It may be asked whether the situation had undergone any serious change between April 26 and August 1, 1918? The answer is not in doubt. It will be recalled that the Czecho-Slovak officer from whom we have frequently cited, stated that " with the occupation of Vladivostok " the Czecho-Slovaks had conquered their " freedom of movement along the whole Siberian line." Many of the Americans who participated in this extraordinary expedition were on their return home indignantly outspoken on this subject; prominent among them was a Mr. C. H. Smith, who represented his Government on the " Inter-Allied Railway Committee in Siberia." Mr. Smith, in the course of a report " on the Siberian situation " to a meeting of the " Foreign Policy Association " at New York, on March 4, 1922, stated :

" In 1918 the Allies decided to aid the Czechs—who, by the way, didn't need the aid and without which they extricated themselves.

" The Allies then decided that since they were there they must aid somebody, so they decided to aid the Russians—who hadn't asked for aid.

" As a result, the Inter-Allied Committee was formed—of which I had the good fortune or misfortune (I don't know which) to be a member."

As further proof that the Czecho-Slovaks were not in danger from Austrian-German prisoners of war and that the Soviet Government was desirous of settling the matter, it should be noted that :

(*a*) The Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs immediately issued a reply to the declarations of the four Allied Governments stating that the Czecho-Slovaks were not in danger, but at the same time asking these Governments " to formulate their wishes in the matter."

(*b*) Although the four Governments had diplomatic representatives on Soviet territory at the time, Chicherin's request was left unanswered.

Mr. Bruce Lockhart had no doubt as to the Soviet's desires. He declared : " That the Bolsheviks were anxious to settle the affair amicably was evident " (*Memoirs of a British Agent*, p. 285).

Another excuse advanced in justification of the armed invasion of Siberia was that the Allies were endeavouring to re-establish the " Eastern Front." The distance separating Vladivostok from the " Eastern Front " of the world war is over 6,000 miles. The proposition therefore was to re-establish the " Eastern Front " with lines of communication running through 6,000 miles of disturbed country. Supplies could only be guaranteed if these 6,000 miles of railway were guarded. Was this argument even plausible? If the reader will refer again to the opening paragraphs of the official

statement issued by the U.S.A. Government on August 3, 1918, quoted on p. 114, he will notice that Washington did not believe in the possibility of re-constituting the "Eastern Front."

The German High Command apparently were not haunted by the apparition of a reconstructed "Eastern Front"; General Ludendorff commented:

> "The situation in Siberia, behind the Czecho-Slovaks, was so confused that the Entente could find no support there. For that reason it was without importance for us also" (*My War Memories*, by General Ludendorff, p. 655).

Mr. Bruce Lockhart was equally emphatic. He wrote: "I had little faith in the strength of the anti-Bolshevik Russian forces and none at all in the feasibility of reconstituting an Eastern Front against Germany" (*Memoirs of a British Agent*, p. 287).

The writer of the article on Russia in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* commented thus on this military enterprise:

> "Japanese, American, British and French detachments were landed in Vladivostok with instructions of varying intensity: all the intervening Powers gave assurance of their disinterestedness, of their friendship for the Russian people, of their resolve to leave it entirely free to decide as to its destiny; but while the Japanese were committed by their past and their future to safeguard and promote their own interests, the Americans were enjoined to restrict themselves to guarding railway communications and stores, and the French colonial troops held aloof. The British followed a middle course in the sense that part of their contingent, Col. J. Ward's Hampshire Regiment, was pushed forward right through Siberia, but there was no clear military aim in that operation and steps were retraced when the real difficulties set in. Material support was given by the British more than by anybody else, but these measures were in the nature of a risky speculation dependent on the trend of home politics and on the ability of the 'White Guards' to win the game" (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. 31–32, pp. 325–6).

Not only is there not a word in that paragraph about "re-establishing the Eastern Front" but it is evident that that writer regarded the enterprise as of small moment and lacking in definite aim, or at least in definite military aim.

Further evidence on this point would, we maintain, be superfluous. As already mentioned, the Czecho-Slovaks at Vladivostok started to entrain on July 12, 1918, for Central Siberia; and the British, U.S.A., French and Japanese forces which landed in the first two weeks of August 1918 followed the now westward-moving Czecho-Slovaks.

The German High Command observed with clear eyes the tragic drama which had been and was being enacted in Siberia; General Ludendorff wrote:

> "The weapon forged against us was now to be turned against the Soviet Government itself, for the Entente . . . took action against Bolshevism, and instead of sending these troops to France, held them up along the Siberian railway on the frontier between Russia and Siberia, in order to fight against the Government in Moscow" (*My War Memories*, by General Ludendorff, pp. 654–5).

No doubt the Allied calculation when they decided to keep the Czecho-Slovak forces in Siberia and to send them reinforcements was twofold, viz., to form a big rallying centre for the Tsarist elements, and to assist in starving Central Russia by depriving the latter of access to one of her great granaries, Siberia. At the risk of wearying our readers we must quote once more from the Czecho-Slovak officer's contributions to the *Daily Telegraph*. On this point, he writes: "*We prevented . . . the Bolsheviks from drawing vast supplies for themselves from Siberia.*"

As mentioned on an earlier page, the Soviets were in political control of Siberia when the Czecho-Slovak forces first entrained in Eastern European Russia and Western Siberia for Vladivostok. As town after town fell to the victorious Czecho-Slovaks, they suppressed the local Soviets and assisted in re-establishing the pre-revolutionary zemstvos or local councils.

Under the friendly protection of foreign bayonets three new "Governments" sprang up with mushroom speed, and with enduring qualities scarcely exceeding those of that fungus. The first was "proclaimed" at Samara on June 8, 1918, the second later in that month at Omsk, the third early in July at Vladivostok. On September 5, 1918, a State Council met at Ufa, representative of the three "Governments," and several other groups. It was there decided to merge the three "Governments," to make Omsk the seat of the new Government, and a Directorate of five (viz., one Social Revolutionary, one Cadet, two non-Partisans and one Populist) was appointed to constitute the "All-Russian Government," which it was hoped would some day sit in the Kremlin.

The Directorate arrived in Omsk on September 9, 1918, met the members of the "Omsk Government" and discovered that the Ministers were not enthusiastically in favour of handing over their offices; however, after a wrangle the representatives of the Allies succeeded in restoring peace on terms, the principal one of which was that the Directorate agreed to co-opt seven Ministers of the "Omsk Government," including Admiral Koltchak, the Minister for War.

The "All-Russian Government" claimed that it was supported by all sections of the population, except the Bolsheviks and the Monarchists. Abroad, the new Government was acclaimed by all sections of the Russian *émigrés* except the votaries of Tsardom.

Meanwhile, in European Russia, the organisation of the Red Army was steadily proceeding despite a thousand difficulties, and on September 8, 1918, Kazan, and a few

days later Simbirsk and Samara, were occupied by the Soviet forces, but the railway lines from the Urals to Vladivostok remained in the hands of the Czecho-Slovaks and the Allied troops.

The Omsk "All-Russian Government," supported by the Czecho-Slovaks, but disliked by the Monarchists, addressed itself to the task of organising an army. For this purpose it engaged, no doubt with misgivings, some thousands of Tsarist officers—Monarchists almost to a man. These gentry were very soon complete masters of the situation and showed it. Professor E. A. Ross describes a portentous episode which occurred in Omsk early in November 1918, thus:

> "At an official dinner given in honour of the Allies, the band began to play 'God save the Tsar.' Captain Kozek, who represented the Czech National Council at this dinner, arose and warned the Chairman that the Czechs would withdraw if the band played this air again. Similar warnings were voiced by the other Allies, but soon the band again played 'God save the Tsar.' The Allied representatives left the hall in a body. The next day the All-Russian Government was informed that unless it immediately apologized for the events of the preceding evening and punished the Cossack colonel who at the muzzle of a revolver had forced the band to play the former national hymn, the Allied representatives would inform their governments. Nevertheless, the officer caste was too arrogant to be curbed, and nothing was done" (*The Russian Soviet Republic*, p. 206).

The failure of the Allies to back their protests by deeds was interpreted by the Monarchist officers as presenting them with *carte blanche*, a construction upon which they acted within a week.

On November 18, 1918, the Omsk "All-Russian Government" was overthrown by a camarilla of Tsarist officers and a "Council of Ministers" constituted themselves the

Government. This Council hustled at a rate not usually associated with Tsarist Russia : they immediately appointed Admiral Koltchak as Dictator, and on the following day, November 19, 1918, the latter issued the following official declaration :

> " The All-Russian Government has been abolished. The Council of Ministers took upon itself the whole power in the country, and has given it to me, Koltchak, Admiral of the Russian Navy."

Two days after the issuance of this edict, the Czecho-Slovak National Council passed and published the following resolution :

> " The Russian Division of the Czecho-Slovak National Council, in order to put a stop to conjectures respecting its attitude toward current events, hereby declares :
>
> " That the Czecho-Slovak army, which is fighting for the ideals of liberty and the self-government of nations, cannot and will not co-operate or sympathize with a violent change which is diametrically opposed to such ideals. The change of November 18 at Omsk has subverted the very foundation of that very principle of law and order which must be the beginning of every government."

The Czecho-Slovak Commander-in-Chief, General Syrovoy had no delusions as to what the *coup d'état* in essence meant ; he publicly declared :

> " The change of government has killed our soldiers. They say that for years they have been fighting for democracy and now that a dictator rules at Omsk they are no longer fighting for a democracy. Since the armistice all the soldiers want to go home to fight the Germans and Magyars in their own country rather than fight the Russians."

General Syrovoy, and his Chief of Staff, General Dietrichs, refused to recognise the authority of Koltchak and retired,

the former's place being taken by a confessed supporter of Tsardom, the Russian General, Ganchin.

The rank and file of the Czecho-Slovak forces, who had been undoubtedly misled by some of their leaders into thinking that their continued stay in Russia was in the interest of democratic Government, were even more deeply resentful of the happenings at Omsk than their Council and Generals. The following cable, dated " Omsk, December 19, 1918," appeared in *The Times* of December 31 :

> " The Czechs are Socialists, and have a natural affinity for the Russian Socialists who shaped the Samara Government and other local bodies, which have given the Czechs military and other assistance. Their relations with the Siberian Government at Omsk, on the other hand, had been steadily getting less satisfactory until the overthrow of the Directory, which the Czechs have viewed as a set-back to Socialism and the triumph of reaction. For this reason they withdrew from the front, and some of them have been suspected of readiness to throw their weight against Admiral Koltchak's Government."

The Czecho-Slovak opposition towards Koltchak and his " Council of Ministers " was unhesitatingly endorsed by all the Russian groups both within and without the country with the sole exception of the Monarchists : to all the opponents of Tsardom it was axiomatic that the " Supreme Ruler's " aim was (whatever his verbal professions, for public consumption in Allied countries) the unfettered restoration of the Absolute Monarchy.

On the balance of probabilities, it was certainly not without significance that the Monarchist *coup d'état* at Omsk occurred only seven days after the signature of the Armistice in Western Europe : it looked as though the Monarchists desired to face the Allied Governments with a *fait accompli* and that they were assured in advance of support from at least individual members of the various Allied Governments.

Whilst the Armistice was being celebrated in the Entente capitals, the Czecho-Slovak and Allied forces were in occupation of the railway line extending from Vladivostok to the Urals, thus cutting off Central Russia from the grain of Siberia.

We shall return in a later chapter to the policy pursued by the Allied Governments in Siberia after the Armistice celebrations had ceased in Western Europe.

CHAPTER IX

GENESIS OF INTERVENTION FROM SOUTH AND WEST

IT WILL BE REMEMBERED that on p. 79 we quoted from a communication dated " Moscow, April 20, 1918 " by that competent and well-informed observer, Colonel Raymond Robins, in which he averred : " Death Kornilov verified, this final blow organised internal force against Soviet Government."

We think it will be admitted from the evidence which we shall advance in subsequent pages that, were it not for the policies pursued by the Allied Governments and their then mortal enemy, the German Government, little more would have been heard of civil war in Russia after the death of Kornilov.

This would appear to have been the opinion—at least to some extent—of even General Wrangel himself; he wrote :

> " After Kornilov's death and his defeat at the Kuban, it was hardly possible that the reorganization of the Army should go on, especially as it was rumoured that the Generals were far from being in agreement with one another " (*Memoirs of General Wrangel*, p. 48).

However, the military occupation of the Ukraine by Germany with the consent and co-operation of the Rada, the Japanese landing at Vladivostok followed later by the Allied occupation of that port, the revolt of the Czecho-Slovak forces and the Allied occupation of Archangel, all combined to enable the counter-revolutionary elements again to raise their reactionary heads.

As the German occupation of the Ukraine extended to its eastern marches, Tsarist officers from every part of Russia

flocked to Kiev. General Wrangel, who visited the Ukraine and White Russia in the late spring and early summer of 1918, wrote :

" Kiev was packed full of officers. . . . Almost the whole of my 7th division was there too."

" Most of the officers had been loyal to their duty and their colours until the last, and had been present at the dissolution of their regiments and the collapse of the army.

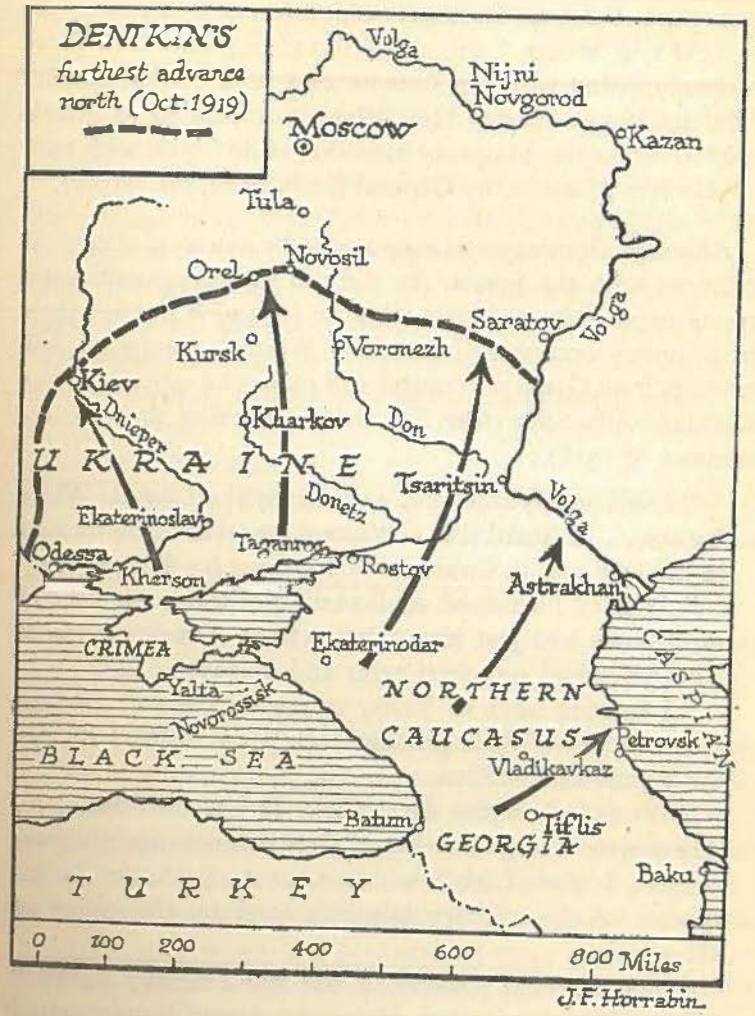
" And now these last fragments of the Great Russian Army had met at Kiev " (*Memoirs of General Wrangel*, pp. 47–8).

In the spring and summer of 1918, there was a general trek of " White " officers and the Russian dispossessed classes generally into the territory of the Don Cossacks and the Kuban in the hope of organising there a strong anti-Soviet Army. The reason for this is not far to seek. The Cossacks of the Don and the Kuban had been the bloodhounds of the Tsarist Government, they had enjoyed many special privileges, including grants of the best lands in Russia, and in return they could be relied upon to bludgeon any and every form of social discontent. They had been used thus by the Tsarist Government, and naturally enough the "Whites" hoped that the Cossacks would render them a similar service.

In the Don provinces, General Krasnov (he is described as " *the Tsarist General Krasnov* " on p. 48 of *Memoirs of General Wrangel*) had raised the banner of revolt, and in the Kuban it was in the hands of Generals Alexeiev and Denikin.

To deal with the " Tsarist General Krasnov " first. To an extent, at least, he was helped by the German High Command. General Ludendorff wrote :

" The Don Cossacks held the lower Don as far as our own area of occupation. Their Hetman, General Krasnov, was decidedly anti-Bolshevik, and was opposing the Soviet troops. He had, however, neither arms nor ammunition. I had got into touch with him in order to prevent his joining the Entente. The situation was complicated by the



fact that I could not put difficulties in the way of the Home Government's pro-Bolshevik policy, of which, of course, I was informed, and Krasnov regarded the Soviet Government, and not the Entente, as his enemy.

" At all events, I succeeded in holding him back from openly siding with the Entente and, to a certain extent, in making an ally of him. If we had decided to attack Moscow, he would openly have thrown in his lot with us " (*My War Memories*, by General Ludendorff, pp. 655–6).

Although Germany was supposed to be in a state of normal relations with the Soviet, she did not make impossible the recruitment of forces in the Ukraine (of which she was then in complete occupation) for the " White " Armies. A few extracts from General Wrangel will make the attitude of the German authorities clear. He wrote (referring to the early summer of 1918) :

" I will notsaymuch more about my short stay in White Russia. . . . I heard that a White Army was being formed in the Don and in Caucasia so I set out for Kiev again.

" At Kiev I received confirmation of the news. One of my friends had just had a letter from Alexeiev himself. The Allies had promised arms and money.

" I hurried back to Yalta, where I gave my children into the care of their grandmother, after which I set out for Rostov on the Don.

" We sailed on the *King Albert*. It was crowded. . . . There were a large number of Germans amongst the passengers. I made friends with a German professor, an inspector of the military hospitals used by the Army of Occupation.

" The German Command did not officially prohibit officers from joining the Volunteer Army, but in actual practice they put all kinds of difficulties in the way. At Kertch our passports were examined. As I was with the German professor, they did not even glance at our papers " (*Memoirs of General Wrangel*, pp. 49–50).

If the " difficulties " experienced by the other " White " officers travelling from the Ukraine to join the armies of the Don and the Kuban were no greater than those met with by General Wrangel—according to his own narrative—then they had little grounds for complaint against the German Command.

Although the German High Command did not prevent the Ukraine from becoming a recruiting ground for the " White " armies of the Don and the Kuban, they prevented the passage of the Red Army over the railway system of the Ukraine to the Don and the Kuban, and thus rendered considerable additional help to the " Whites." A glance at a good map will show how difficult it was for the Soviet forces, the passage through the Ukraine being forbidden, to reach the Don and Kuban provinces, particularly when the Czecho-Slovaks were in occupation of Samara and other towns on the Volga.

Nevertheless, throughout the summer and autumn of 1918, the Red Army prevented the " White " armies from extending the areas under their sway.

At this time the Allied representative in Moscow was busy supplying the anti-Bolsheviks with funds. Mr. Bruce Lockhart wrote :

" I took advantage of this period of waiting to supply financial aid to the pro-ally organisations, who were badly in need of funds. For weeks the French had furnished this aid single-handed, and my refusal to co-operate in this work had been a sore point with Alexeiev's and Denikin's political representatives. Now that we had reached an open rupture with the Bolsheviks, I contributed my share. Although the banks were closed and all dealings in foreign exchange illegal, money was easily available. There were numerous Russians with hidden stores of roubles. They were only too glad to hand them over in exchange for a promissory note on London. To avoid all suspicion, we collected the roubles through an English firm in Moscow.

They dealt with the Russians, fixed the rate of exchange, and gave the promissory note. In each transaction we furnished the English firm with an official guarantee that it was good for the amount in London. The roubles were brought to the American Consulate-General and were handed over to Hicks, who conveyed them safely to their destined quarters" (*Memoirs of a British Agent*, pp. 312–13).

Although Mr. Lockhart here used the term pro-Ally, he makes it quite clear in his book, as we shall see in a later quotation, that these organisations were simply anti-Soviet and that their sole purpose was the overthrow of the Soviet régime.

In August 1918, General Alexeiev died and General Denikin became Commander-in-Chief. General Denikin also had a " Government," one which defies classification. The historian of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* wrote thus regarding this innovation :

" By his [Denikin's] side stood a Special Council composed of the heads of departments and of a few representatives of public opinion. All the members—some twenty—were nominated by the commander-in-chief. The elements of military and civil bureaucracy were decidedly predominant, and the ' Left ' was confined to three cadets, all moderate Liberals. The Socialist parties were excluded from the Government and kept under strict supervision as regards their Press " (Vol. 31–32, p. 326).

When the Armistice was signed in Western Europe, Generals Krasnov and Denikin were in occupation of very limited areas, and with the withdrawal of the German forces from the Ukraine they would in all probability soon have been swept into the Black Sea by the Red Army. The Allied Governments apparently recognised this, and one of their first acts was to rush aid to the " Whites " through the Dardanelles.

We shall return to this phase of the struggle in a later chapter.

CHAPTER X

AFTER THE ARMISTICE IN WESTERN EUROPE

EVEN BEFORE THE CESSATION of hostilities in Western Europe, Moscow had made several approaches to the Allied Governments with a view to the opening up of peace negotiations. On October 17, 1918, Chicherin sent an offer through the Norwegian Legation ; a week later, through the attaché of the Norwegian Legation, who was at that time leaving Moscow ; and on November 3, through the representatives of the neutral countries in Russia.

It is of importance to note here that although Great Britain, the U.S.A., France, Italy, and Japan were making war on Soviet Russia, not one of them had ever declared war on her.

To quote Mr. Churchill :

" The fitful and fluid operations of the Russian armies found a counterpart in the policy, or want of policy, of the Allies. Were they at war with Soviet Russia ? Certainly not ; but they shot Soviet Russians at sight. They stood as invaders on Russian soil. They armed the enemies of the Soviet Government. They blockaded its ports, and sunk its battleships. They earnestly desired and schemed its downfall. But war—shocking ! Interference—shame ! It was, they repeated, a matter of indifference to them how Russians settled their own internal affairs " (*The World Crisis : The Aftermath*, by Winston S. Churchill, p. 235).

The Allies, in fact, were not conducting open war against the Soviet ; they were doing worse, they were making piratical attacks on the Russian Republic.

Despite the enthusiasm with which the formation of "A League of Nations," with all that it should connote, was being canvassed at that time in Western Europe and America, the Allies left the Russian peace offers unanswered, thus demonstrating that "the League spirit" was somewhat weak, if not completely non-existent.

The Soviets made another attempt: on November 8, 1918, the following resolution was passed in Moscow:

> "The Sixth All-Russian Extraordinary Congress of Councils of Workers', Peasants', Cossack, and Red Army Deputies considers it its duty once more in the face of the whole world to declare to the Governments of the United States of America, England, France, Italy, and Japan, waging war against Russia, that, with a view to the cessation of bloodshed, the Congress proposes to open negotiations for the conclusion of peace.
>
> "The Congress charges the All-Russian Central Executive Committee to take immediate steps necessary for the carrying out of this decision."

This resolution was wirelessed on the following day to the world at large and was printed in the Russian Press, but the Allied Governments sent neither verbal nor written replies, though it is beyond dispute that they knew the Soviet Government was not only willing, but eager to negotiate the re-establishment of peaceful relations.

The Entente Chancelleries despatched neither oral nor calligraphic rejoinders to the Soviet peace offer, but Great Britain sent an answer of another nature. Mr. Winston Churchill relates that, on November 30, 1918, the British representatives at Archangel and Vladivostok were informed that the British Government intended to pursue the following lines of policy towards Russia:

> "To remain in occupation at Murmansk and Archangel for the time being; to continue the Siberian Expedition; to try to persuade the Czechs to remain in Western Siberia; to occupy (with five British brigades) the Baku-Batum railway; to give General Denikin at Novorossisk all possible help in the way of military material; to supply the Baltic States with military material" (*The World Crisis: The Aftermath*, pp. 165–6).

This soldier-politician commented thus on the decision:

> "This was a far-reaching programme. It not only comprised existing commitments, but added to them large new enterprises in the Caucasus and in South Russia" (ibid., p. 166).

Our Government spurned the Russian offers of peace, and without making the slightest attempt to settle outstanding issues by negotiation, decided not only to continue their policy of buccaneering, a course which they must have known would have meant a considerable loss of life, to say nothing of suffering to both sides, but to extend that policy considerably. *Every British life lost in Russia, from the date of the Armistice in Western Europe up to the end of the period of intervention, was wantonly* sacrificed and worse than thrown away, because the sacrifice also involved death, suffering, and destruction for Soviet citizens.

Britain was war weary, intervention in Russia was not popular, and an attempt, no matter how lame, had to be made to justify the Government's policy. Accordingly, Lord Milner, the Secretary of State for War, on December 18, 1918, sent the following letter to the Press in reply to an anonymous correspondent (we quote from *The Times* of December 19, 1918):

> "You ask me what right we ever had to send British troops to Russia to meddle with the internal affairs of that country, and how long we mean to keep them there now that war is over. The question itself shows that you misapprehend the facts of the case, as well as the motives of the Government.

"The reason why Allied, not merely British forces—indeed, the British are only a small proportion of the total Allied troops—were sent to Russia, is that the Bolshevists, whatever their ultimate object, were in fact assisting our enemies in every possible way. It was owing to their action that hundreds of thousands of German troops were let loose to hurl themselves against our men on the Western front. It was owing to their betrayal that Rumania, with all its rich resources in grain and oil, fell into the hands of the Germans. It was they who handed over the Black Sea Fleet to the Germans, and who treacherously attacked the Czecho-Slovaks, when the latter only desired to get out of Russia in order to fight for the freedom of their own country in Europe.

"The Allies, every one of them, were most anxious to avoid interference in Russia. But it was an obligation of honour to save the Czecho-Slovaks, and it was a military necessity of the most urgent kind to prevent those vast portions of Russia which were struggling to escape the tyranny of the Bolshevists from being overrun by them, and so thrown open as a source of supply to the enemy. I say nothing of the enormous quantities of military stores, the property of the Allies, which were still lying at Archangel and Vladivostok, and which were in course of being appropriated by the Bolshevists and transferred to the Germans till the Allied occupation put an end to the process.

"And this intervention was successful. The rot was stopped. The Czecho-Slovaks were saved from destruction. The resources of Siberia and South-Eastern Russia were denied to the enemy. The northern ports of European Russia were prevented from becoming bases for German submarines from which our North Sea barrage could have been turned. These were important achievements and contributed materially to the defeat of Germany. I say nothing of the fact that a vast portion of the earth's surface, and millions of people friendly to the Allies, have been spared the unspeakable horrors of Bolshevist rule.

"But in the course of this Allied intervention thousands of Russians have taken up arms and fought on the side of the Allies. How can we, simply because our own immediate purposes have been served, come away and leave them to the tender mercies of their and our enemies, before they have had time to arm, train, and organise so as to be strong enough to defend themselves? It would be an abominable betrayal, contrary to every British instinct of honour and humanity.

"You may be quite sure that the last thing the Government desires is to leave any British soldiers in Russia a day longer than is necessary to discharge the moral obligations we have incurred. And that, I believe, is the guiding principle of the Allies. Nor do I myself think that the time when we can withdraw without disastrous consequences is necessarily distant. But this is a case in which the more haste may be the less speed. If the Allies were all to scramble out of Russia at once, the result would almost certainly be that the barbarism, which at present reigns in a part only of that country, would spread over the whole of it, including the vast regions of Northern and Central Asia, which were included in the dominions of the Tsars. The ultimate consequences of such a disaster cannot be foreseen. But they would assuredly involve a far greater strain on the resources of the British Empire than our present commitments."

The paragraph before the last in this piece of special pleading was, at the time, of the most practical importance. Lord Milner plaintively asks: "How can we, simply because our own immediate purposes have been served, come away and leave them [the Russians who were supporting the 'Governments' of Archangel, and Messieurs Koltchak and Denikin] to the tender mercies of their and our enemies?" Not a word about the Soviet's repeated peace

offers. Lord Milner, as a member of the Cabinet, cannot but have been cognisant of them. Why then this silence? Was it because the Government wanted to keep the Moscow overtures from public knowledge as far as was practically possible? We suggest that this is the only hypothesis which fits the facts.

Further, before Mr. Bruce Lochkart had left Moscow for London in October 1918, he had been officially informed, to quote his own words, that: "The Bolsheviks were prepared to offer an amnesty to all counter-revolutionaries who would accept the régime, and a free exit out of Russia to the Czechs and to the Allies." Lord Milner was no doubt also well aware of that fact.

By a coincidence, in the very edition of *The Times* which contained Lord Milner's declaration, a letter appeared from Mr. Douglas Young (who, incidentally, had an infinitely greater knowledge of Russia than the then Secretary of State for War) in which he wrote:

> "I entirely agree . . . that honour forbids the unconditional withdrawal of our forces from Archangel . . .
>
> "Can we not negotiate and endeavour to remove suspicions and misunderstandings which have arisen, in part at any rate, through our failure to fit our actions towards Russia to the 'acid test' enunciated by President Wilson?" (*The Times*, December 19, 1918).

Mr. Young, who both by training and experience was well equipped to form an accurate judgment, averred on numerous occasions that he was confident that a *modus vivendi* could have been found.

It is of considerable significance that the *Daily Telegraph* did not by any means find Lord Milner's apologia convincing; in a leading article it commented:

> "The country is entitled to more information than that. It ought to be told what prospect there is of these protégés of the Alliance 'arming, training, and organizing so as to be strong enough to defend themselves.' We ought to hear something reliable about the mutual differences of the various anti-Bolshevik elements with whom the Allies are co-operating, and whether there is any ground for the allegation that their intervention is turning to the advantage mainly of the partisans of the régime which the revolution overthrew. We have at present a war on our hands in Russia such as would have filled the newspapers at any normal time; and the nation is entitled to know how that war is going, and what end to it is contemplated by the Government" (*Daily Telegraph*, December 19, 1918).

The only observation we wish to make here on the comments of the *Daily Telegraph* is that "the country" did get "the information" which it was "entitled to" in two editions: it got it objectively when "these protégés of the Alliance" were driven out of Russia by the bayonets of the Red Army, and it got it subjectively in the British Government White Papers, published after the period of intervention had come to an end, i.e., after British and Russian lives had been squandered in a foredoomed imbecile attempt to put back the clock of history.

Despite the fact that none of Russia's peace offers had elicited even an acknowledgment from the Allied Governments and that a fresh overture might be interpreted as a confession of weakness on the part of the Soviets, Moscow made another attempt to persuade the Allies to try the way of negotiations rather than the barbaric road of mutual slaughter. On January 10, 1919, Litvinov, at Stockholm, sent a lengthy statement to Dr. Ludwig Meyer (Advocate at the Supreme Court of Norway) for issuance to the world Press, in the course of which he stated:

> "Lord Milner has recently declared one of the reasons of Allied intervention in Russia to be the protection of the so-called 'Russian friends of the Allies,' who may be exposed to reprisals in case the Soviet régime re-establishes itself in parts of Russia now occupied by the Allies. This

apprehension should certainly not be in the way of an understanding with the Soviets, since the latter would be willing to give the Allies' friends the necessary guarantees for their safety and amnesty for their past offences. Irrespective of their line of policy in the past and of the social classes to which they previously belonged they would be given a fair chance of finding work within the Soviet System, according to their ability, education, and knowledge. It is our firm conviction that the discontinuance of foreign intervention would mean the cessation of civil war in Russia in its present form, and that there would be no necessity for any Press restrictions.

" The only demand the Soviet Republic has to put to the Allies is that they should discontinue all direct or indirect military operations against Soviet Russia, all direct or indirect material assistance to Russian or other forces operating against the Soviet Government, and also every kind of economic warfare and boycott."

This overture shared the fate of its several predecessors : it was ignored by London, Paris, Washington, etc., or, to quote the *Daily Telegraph* of December 28, 1918, referring to all the approaches : " These proposals have met with no response."

There is one implication in Lord Milner's letter to which so far we have only made passing references—that the " Whites " were loyal to the cause of the Allies. If the Secretary of State for War believed this he must have been not only singularly ignorant but equally misinformed of what had happened in Russia earlier in 1918.

As already mentioned, General Krasnov, the leader of the anti-Soviet forces in the Don district, was so loyal to the Allies that, on the authority of General Ludendorff, he (Ludendorff) " succeeded . . . to a certain extent in making an ally of him " ; the German general might have added that he supplied Krasnov with arms and munitions in return for the agricultural produce of the Don, of which the Reich at that time stood in such dire need.

As regards the Ukraine—the Rada was a confessed ally of Germany. General Wrangel (when he visited the Ukraine, after the " November " Revolution, in the early summer of 1918, as mentioned on an earlier page) had a lengthy consultation with Skoropadsky, who had just been " proclaimed " Hetman (Chief of State) of the Ukraine. Wrangel relates :

" At the beginning of the World War he had been a colonel in the Horse Guards and I had been a major.

" After a few months he had risen to the rank of major-general, and I had been his chief-of-staff. Now I was curious to see him at work.

" Skoropadsky's first words were : ' I am relying on you : would you like to be my chief-of-staff? We will soon have a powerful Ukrainian army.'

" I answered that since I had no stake in the Ukraine and knew nothing about local conditions, it would not be right for me to occupy the position.

" The two of us talked at great length. I was sure that the World War, which was still going on, would end in the defeat of Germany, and that the Germans, who were supporting the Hetman, would be forced to evacuate Russia. Once this happened, the Hetman's Government would fall, and furthermore, since Germany was lending her support for purely selfish reasons, she would never tolerate the formation of a strong Ukrainian army.

" Skoropadsky, however, held very firmly to the contrary opinion. According to him, the Ukraine, supported by Austria and the Slav countries, would become very powerful and play a leading part in the future " (*The Memoirs of General Wrangel*, pp. 46–7).

It will be noticed that the issue discussed between the Hetman and the General was not the morality of co-operating with the Allies or the immorality of association with Germany. No, the issue was unity with the side which was going to win !

As to the thousands of Tsarist officers who were then in Kiev, General Wrangel narrates :

" Some hoped to go on fighting for Russia under the Ukrainian flag, others to get to the region of the Don, where the Cossacks had renounced Bolshevism and elected the Czarist General Krasnov as Ataman. The rest intended to join the Volunteer Army, which, it was said, was in course of formation " (*The Memoirs of General Wrangel*, p. 48).

It is hardly necessary to explain that " fighting for Russia under the Ukrainian flag " meant co-operating with the Kaiser against the Allies. At that time the Ukraine was supplying Germany with all kinds of foodstuffs, thus to no inconsiderable extent nullifying the effects of the blockade.

As regards General Alexeiev, Ludendorff states :

" In the wide, fertile Steppes of the Kuban region between the Don Cossacks and the Caucasus, General Alexeiev, with his Volunteer Army, was, as I have already stated, fighting the Bolshevik troops. He was acting under English influence. I think, however, he was too good a Russian not to have joined us if we had been opposing the Soviet Government " (*My War Memories, 1914–18*, Vol. II., p. 656).

We give General Ludendorff's opinion for what it is worth, recognising, of course, that by itself it would not necessarily have been convincing.

In August 1918, copies of a statement a dressed to the Cadet Party by Miliukov (Foreign Minister in the Provisional Government) appeared in the Kiev newspapers denouncing those of his colleagues who were against entering into contact with Germany, and defending the policy of " calling in their [Germany's] assistance in order to create a stable Government and to restore order."

The *Encyclopædia Britannica* has something very apposite to say respecting Miliukov :

" The question of yielding to the Germans and crushing the Communists with their help was eagerly discussed in connection with the plan of a monarchical restoration. The idea found favour among the Rights and was supported among the Cadets by P. Miliukov, who had fled to Kiev, and considered that the game was definitely lost by the western Allies and that it was wiser to accept defeat from the Germans than from the Bolsheviks " (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. 31–32, p. 323).

Kerensky in the course of an address at an Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist Conference in London in October 1918, said that the Governments of the Ukraine, Finland, and the Don were " in alliance with Germany " ; and that " one party of the Liberals with Miliukov at their head was ready to pass over to the side of Germany, if Germany wished."

The British man-on-the-spot, Mr. Bruce Lockhart, is emphatic on this point. He declared :

" The one aim of every Russian bourgeois (and 99 per cent of the so-called ' loyal ' Russians were bourgeois) was to secure the intervention of British troops (and, failing British, German troops) to re-establish order in Russia, suppress Bolshevism and restore to the bourgeois his property " (*Memoirs of a British Agent*, p. 213).

The Russian " Whites " were in fact neither pro-Ally no anti-German. They were simply anti-Bolshevik, and co-operation with the Allies or with Germany was to them not a question of principle but of expediency as to which side would be victorious in the end and would be able to assist them in overthrowing the Soviets.

Reverting again to Lord Milner's letter—its omissions were as cynical as its contents were disquieting. The Governments of Japan, Great Britain, the U.S.A., and France (on the occasion of the landing of troops in Vladivostok) pledged themselves in solemn terms before the whole world to the Russian people not to interfere in the internal affairs of that

country. The four declarations constituted as solemn a pledge and as binding in national honour as the treaty guaranteeing the Independence of Belgium. This pledge, however, was not treated as " a scrap of paper," it was completely ignored.

Had the offer made by Litvinov, in reply to the declaration of Lord Milner, been accepted by the Allies, there is little or no doubt that an amicable agreement could have been negotiated. We base our deduction on two important facts. Apart from the Tsarist officers and the members of the dispossessed classes, the " White " armies were not volunteer armies. On the contrary, they were conscript armies of the most compulsory type. General Wrangel gave the following descriptive account of his method of " voluntary " recruiting :

> " We took three thousand prisoners and a large number of machine guns. . . .
>
> " I ordered three hundred and seventy of the Bolshevists to line up. They were all officers and non-commissioned officers, and I had them shot on the spot. Then I told the rest that they too deserved death, but that I had let those who had misled them take the responsibility for their treason, because I wanted to give them a chance to atone for their crime and prove their loyalty to their country.
>
> " Weapons were distributed to them immediately, and two weeks later they went to the fighting line " (*Memoirs of General Wrangel*, pp. 58–9).

Both in Archangel and Siberia, the unreliability of the rank and file of the troops serving under the " White " Governments, as we shall demonstrate in later chapters, was notorious.

Large numbers of the rank and file of Wrangel's army, who were evacuated from the Crimea in November 1920, afterwards petitioned the Soviet Government for permission to return home. Their request was granted, they were transported back to the villages, and they are now good and useful citizens of the Russian Republic.

As to the Tsarist officers and the members of the former wealthy classes—many, no doubt, would have elected to leave Russia ; these could have been compensated. A small portion of what the Allies subsequently wasted on armed intervention and support of the " White " armies would have enabled them to have done this and done it generously ; on the other hand, some would have preferred to have made their peace with the Soviets and to remain in Russia. During the last ten years, we have met both in Russia and abroad men occupying important positions in the Soviet institutions who had fought in the ranks of the " White " armies, and who had been left behind or had elected to remain behind, either in North Russia, Siberia, or South Russia, after the final evacuations by the Allies.

CHAPTER XI

THE PROPOSED PRINKIPO CONFERENCE

In January 1919 the Allied Governments were in a dilemma of their own creation, or to express it perhaps more accurately, they were the victims of their own propaganda. They had denounced the Bolsheviks in such terms of picturesque abuse that it was somewhat difficult to make approaches to Moscow without an apparent loss of dignity; at the same time the peoples of the Allied countries were war weary, all wanted peace, and the Allied statesmen were conscious, in the words of President Wilson, "... that Europe and the world cannot be at peace if Russia is not."

These statesmen wanted to restore peace in and with Russia, or at any rate ostensibly they did, yet they took steps immediately calculated to stave off peace in and with Russia.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, they rushed aid to the "White" forces, and to all other forces opposing the Soviets. This aid was on a wide and extensive front. A glance at the London Press for the last two weeks of December 1918 establishes this fact beyond doubt.

The *Daily Telegraph's* Correspondent in South Russia, Mr. H. C. Owen, cabled his paper from Constantinople on December 13, 1918:

> "British warships have now visited every important Russian port, and the White Ensign has been seen also in the Sea of Azov, and a number of ports on the Asia Minor coast have also been visited, including Trebizond and Samsun."

The moral and material support of the Allies stiffened and strengthened the "Whites" but the representative of the

Daily Telegraph was very uneasy as to what would ensue should the Allies not continue their assistance. In the message quoted above, he also declared:

> "The Russian Volunteer Army, which for long past has been fighting hard against the Bolsheviks, has won back most of the region around the Taurida coast and has to some extent helped to free the Crimean peninsula; but there *is no certainty that they will be able to hold what they have won*. Their cry is for munitions and help. The situation at Sevastopol, which is largely typical of the rest of the northern Black Sea coast, is on the surface calm for the time being, but undoubtedly there are strong elements ripe for another bloody uprising *if the influence of the Allies were withdrawn*" (our italics).

The "White" armies were a cardboard façade held up by Allied props.

In the Baltic, the Allied forces had also been extremely active. A few extracts from *The Times* correspondent in the Baltic States will make this clear:

> "Stockholm, *December 17, 1918.*
>
> "A Helsingfors telegram states that the last of the German troops under General von der Goltz has now left Finland, and that a British squadron is expected to visit Helsingfors soon, though the exact date of the visit has not yet been made known."
>
> "Stockholm, *December 28, 1918.*
>
> "Estonian troops shipped at Reval under cover of the British squadron have been landed at Portakunda, on the coast between Narva and Rakvere, to take the invading Bolshevist forces in the rear."
>
> "Stockholm, *December 28, 1918.*
>
> "A delegation from the Lithuanian Government at Libau has obtained an interview with the Admiral commanding the British squadron in the Baltic, who assured them that the Allies would lend the Lithuanians every

assistance to organise their defence in order to resist a Bolshevist invasion."

" Helsingfors, *January 4, 1919.*

" My arrival at Helsingfors coincides with the appearance of a British naval division off Sveaborg (a fortress near Helsingfors), and the entry of the cruisers *Calypso* and *Caradoc* into the harbour. . . .

" To-day the second battalion of Finnish volunteers sailed, escorted by British torpedo-boats, for Reval, where, according to reports, the military situation is very unsatisfactory. The menace to Reval is very serious, as the Bolshevists have artillery at their disposal and are advancing rapidly by a concentric movement."

So much for activities in the Baltic and the Baltic States. In south-eastern and south-western Russia, also, Allied forces speedily made their appearance. Under the terms of the Armistice with Turkey and Germany these Powers agreed to evacuate the Caucasus. Their places were taken by Allied military and naval forces : naval forces appeared in the Caspian as well as in the Black Sea, and the Baku to Batum line was occupied by Allied troops. The encirclement was completed when Allied troops from Salonica entered the Ukraine, through Bessarabia.

As a result of these measures, the various anti-Soviet forces were relatively stronger than the Red Army, and presumably the Allied statesmen, or to be more precise some of the Allied statesmen thought that the time was opportune to try and bring about peace between the Soviet Government and its warring opponents. The statesmen who wanted a cessation of hostilities were soon to find that in strengthening the Russian " Whites " they were nurturing a viper less amenable than ever, just because it was in better fettle, to the music of the Allied charmer.

Assistance having been sent to the " Whites " and others by the Allies, the latter proceeded to try and bring about peace between their protégés and the Soviets. On January

22, 1919, the Peace Conference sent the following message " to the interested parties " :

" The single object the representatives of the Associated Powers have had in mind in their discussions of the course they should pursue with regard to Russia has been to help the Russian people, not to hinder them, or to interfere in any manner with their right to settle their own affairs in their own way.

" The Associated Powers are now engaged in the solemn and responsible work of establishing the peace of Europe, and of the world, and they are keenly alive to the fact that Europe and the world cannot be at peace if Russia is not. They recognize and accept it as their duty, therefore, to serve Russia in this great matter as generously, as unselfishly, as thoughtfully, and ungrudgingly as they would serve every other friend and ally. And they are ready to render this service in the way that is most acceptable to the Russian people.

" In this spirit and with this purpose, they have taken the following action : They invite every organized group that is now exercising or attempting to exercise political authority or military control in Siberia, or within the boundaries of European Russia as they stood before the war just concluded (except in Finland), to send representatives, not exceeding three representatives for each group, to Princes' Islands, Sea of Marmora, where they will be met by representatives of the Associated Powers, provided, in the meantime, there is a truce of arms amongst the parties invited, and that all armed forces anywhere sent or directed against any people or territory outside the boundaries of European Russia as they stood before the war, or against Finland, or against any people or territory whose autonomous action is in contemplation in the fourteen articles upon which the present negotiations are based, shall be meanwhile withdrawn, and aggressive military action cease.

" A prompt reply to this invitation is requested. Every facility for the journey of the representatives, including transport across the Black Sea, will be given by the Allies, and all the parties concerned are expected to give the same facilities. The representatives will be expected at the place appointed by the fifteenth of February, 1919."

The Times of January 24, 1919, in a leading article heartily endorsed the decision of the Peace Conference and asserted that if the Bolsheviks did not attend " they will have revealed themselves as the enemies of the human race." The article continued :

" On the other hand, if, as we hope, the Bolshevists attend the Marmora meeting and behave reasonably, the gain will be still greater. We shall have made the peace of Europe secure without further fighting ; we shall have laid the foundation of future friendship between the real mind of Russia and the aspirations of the Entente peoples."

The Times was in for a disillusionment, as we shall see in a moment.

The Times Paris Correspondent, commenting on the decision of the Peace Conference, wrote :

" The arguments which led to the unanimous decision in regard to Russia may be broadly indicated in the following statement of the case. Certain portions of the old Russian Empire, such as Poland, are, in the opinion of the Allies, entitled to independence. It is clear that we cannot allow them to be overwhelmed, and that we should support them with all the means at our disposal. There are other more or less unstable Governments, such as the Ukrainian, all of whom claim to represent Russia, and desire the aid of the Allies both in men and material, *some of them not so much for the purpose of acquiring independence, but in order to make their cause prevail in what is, in reality, civil war of a vast and extremely complex character.*

" *Allied expeditions, were they possible, would constitute a clear*

intervention in purely Russian affairs, and could only be justified after every method had been adopted to prevent the ills of Bolshevism from spreading to the whole European body politic. The evidence available shows that for any intervention to be effective it must be carried out with considerable numbers of troops. Where, it is asked, could those men be obtained ?

" American opinion is emphatically opposed to the sending of men for such purpose. Italy could not even be asked to do so, and anyone with a sense of geography can hardly expect the Dominions to furnish their quota. France and Great Britain would have to shoulder the whole burden, which would be heavy, for the restoration of order in Russia is likely to be a long drawn out operation " (*The Times*, January 25, 1919 : our italics).

The Allies did not have to wait long for a considered reply from the three Russian " White " Governments. On January 24th, 1919, Prince Lvov issued the following statement from the Russian Embassy in Paris (the headquarters of the Council of Tsarist Ambassadors and Statesmen) :

" The three organised Governments of Russia—namely, Omsk, Ekaterinodor, and Archangel—the only lawful groups making for national renovation, refuse to associate with Bolshevism. They will not send delegates to the Princes' Islands."

One can almost feel sorry for *The Times* ; on the following day, it lamented :

" The invitation of the Paris Conference to the scattered members of the Russian Empire has not been well received by those whom it was intended to benefit."

The leader writer, discussing the alternative of war on Russia, tritely remarked :

" The plain brutal fact is that a war in Russia against the Bolshevists would be exceedingly unpopular and would make no end of trouble at home."

For some occult reason (or perhaps only too self-evident reason) the Peace Conference forgot to send the invitation to Moscow. Fortunately, however, the news reached that city, and on February 4, 1919, the Soviet sent the following reply :

" The Russian Soviet Government has learned, through a radiogram which contained a review of the press, of an invitation, stated to have been addressed by the Entente Powers to all *de facto* Governments of Russia, to send delegates to a conference on Prinkipo Island.

" As the Soviet Government of Russia has received no such invitation addressed to it, but has learned—and again through a radio review of the press—that the absence of an answer from the Soviet Government is interpreted as a refusal to reply to this invitation, the Russian Soviet Government desires to remove any false interpretation of its actions. On the other hand, in view of the fact that the foreign press systematically reports its actions in a false light, the Russian Soviet Government takes advantage of this opportunity to express its attitude with the utmost clearness and frankness.

" In spite of the fact that both the military and internal conditions of Soviet Russia are constantly improving, the Soviet Government is so anxious to secure an agreement that would put an end to hostilities, *that it is ready to enter at once into negotiations to this end, and, as it has more than once declared, is even willing in order to obtain such an agreement* to make serious concessions, provided they will not menace the future development of Soviet Russia.

" The Russian Soviet Government requests the Entente Powers to make known to it without delay the place to which it should send its representatives, as well as the time and the route " (our italics).

On February 13, 1919, it was officially announced, the Governments of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania had agreed to participate in the proposed conference. Prior to this date,

the Socialist political opponents of the Bolsheviks, the Mensheviks, and the Social Revolutionaries, strongly denounced armed intervention in Russia and declared in favour of the Prinkipo Conference. It will be recalled that the Bolsheviks, Mensheviks, the Social Revolutionaries, together held nine-tenths of the mandates in the Constituent Assembly. The position on February 13, 1919, was that the Baltic States, and the three Russian political parties with parliamentary authority to speak for nine-tenths of the peoples of Russia, were in favour of the proposed Prinkipo Conference, whilst the " Whites," who at most could speak for one-tenth of the people of that country, were against the holding of this conference.

The Allies were certainly in a dilemma, a dilemma of their own creation. Had they not rushed aid to the " Whites " the latter by this date would have been swept out of Russia. This is clear from the writings of General Wrangel, and other " Whites." Mr. Winston Churchill commented thus on the events just narrated :

" The invitation was accepted by the Bolsheviks in ambiguous terms on February 4. The white Governments of Siberia and Archangel, as well as Nabokov, Sazonov and other representatives of the anti-Bolshevik groups, refused it with contempt " (*The World Crisis: The Aftermath*, p. 170).

We admit our inability to understand why Mr. Churchill described the Soviet reply as " ambiguous." Its terms were quite clear and simple.

The Russian " Whites " definitely declined to change their attitude, the proposed conference was dropped, but the Allies, despite the rebuff received from the " Whites," continued, lackey like, to send money, munitions and technical aid to the Tsarists.

What was known as the " Bullitt Mission " followed. Mr. Winston Churchill thus describes its genesis :

" Both the Prinkipo proposals and the study of the military and diplomatic possibilities having been reduced

to nullity, the Americans with the assent of Mr. Lloyd George sent a certain Mr. Bullitt to Russia on February 22. He returned to Paris in a week or two with proposals for an accommodation from the Soviet Government in his pocket" (*The World Crisis : The Aftermath*, p. 176).

These proposals were :

" (1) Soviet Government to give up all propaganda outside Russia.

" (2) Amnesty for all who have taken up arms against the Soviet Government.

" (3) Full and free right of self-determination for the Border States.

" (4) Conference of all parties to decide the future of Greater Russia.

" (5) Payment of all foreign debts."

No one will deny that these terms were eminently reasonable, yet they were not merely rejected, they were ignored, and suppressed,

Mr. William C. Bullitt himself tells us what happened when he returned to Paris[1] :

" The next morning I had breakfast with Mr. Lloyd George at his apartment. Gen. Smuts and Sir Maurice Hankey and Mr. Philip Kerr were also present, and we discussed the matter at considerable length. I brought Mr. Lloyd George the official text of the proposal, the same official one, in that same envelope, which I have just shown to you. He had previously read it, it having been telegraphed from Helsingfors. As he had previously read it, he merely glanced over it and said, ' That is the same one I have already read,' and he handed it to Gen. Smuts, who was across the table, and said, ' General, this is of the utmost importance and interest, and you ought to read it right away.' Gen. Smuts read it immediately, and said he thought it should not be allowed

[1] Mr. William C. Bullitt's testimony before the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, September 12, 1919.

to lapse ; that it was of the utmost importance. Mr. Lloyd George, however, said that he did not know what he could do with British public opinion. He had a copy of the *Daily Mail* in his hand, and he said, ' As long as the British Press is doing this kind of thing how can you expect me to be sensible about Russia ? ' The *Daily Mail* was roaring and screaming about the whole Russian situation. Then Mr. Lloyd George said, ' Of course all the reports we get from people we send in there are in this same general direction, but we have got to send in somebody who is known to the whole world as a complete conservative, in order to have the whole world believe that the report he brings out is not simply the utterance of a radical " (p. 66).

" I saw Mr. Balfour that afternoon with Sir Eric Drummond, who at that time was acting as his secretary. He is now secretary of the League of Nations. We discussed the entire matter. Sir William Wiseman told me afterward that Mr. Balfour was thoroughly in favour of the proposition " (p. 67).

" Col. House in the meantime had seen Mr. Orlando, and Mr. Orlando had expressed himself as entirely in favour of making peace on this basis, at least so Col. House informed me at the time " (p. 67).

(Mr. Orlando was the Chief Italian Representative at the Peace Conference.)

About a week later the following dialogue took place in the House of Commons :

" MR. CLYNES : Before the right honourable gentleman comes to the next subject, can he make any statement on the approaches or representations alleged to have been made to his Government by persons acting on behalf of such government as there is in Central Russia ?

" MR. LLOYD GEORGE : We have had no approaches at all except what have appeared in the papers

" Mr. Clynes : I ask the question because it has been repeatedly alleged.

" Mr. Lloyd George : We have had no approaches at all. Constantly there are men coming and going to Russia of all nationalities, and they always come back with their tales of Russia. But we have made no approach of any sort.

" I have only heard reports of others having proposals which they assume have come from authentic quarters, but these have never been put before the peace conference by any member, and therefore we have not considered them.

" I think I know what my right honorable friend refers to. There was some suggestion that a young American had come back from Russia with a communication. It is not for me to judge the value of this communication, but if the President of the United States had attached any value to it he would have brought it before the conference, and he certainly did not " (ibid., p. 94).

Commenting on these questions and answers, Mr. Bullitt stated :

" About a week after I had handed to Mr. Lloyd George the official proposal, with my own hands, in the presence of three other persons, he made a speech before the British Parliament, and gave the British people to understand that he knew nothing whatever about any such proposition. It was a most egregious case of misleading the public, perhaps the boldest that I have ever known in my life.

" So flagrant was this that various members of the British mission called on me at the Crillon, a day or so later, and apologized for the Prime Minister's action in the case " (ibid., p. 93).

" It was explained to me by the members of the British delegation who called on me, that the reason for this deception was that although when Lloyd George got back

to London he intended to make a statement very favourable to peace with Russia, he found that Lord Northcliffe, acting through Mr. Wickham Steed, the editor of *The Times*, and Mr. Winston Churchill, British Secretary for War, had rigged the conservative majority of the House of Commons against him, and that they were ready to slay him then and there if he attempted to speak what was his own opinion at the moment on Russian policies " (ibid., p. 95).

These reasons were not the only ones, perhaps not even the principal ones. Mr. Bullitt and Mr. Winston Churchill are agreed on that point. The former said :

" The principal reason was entirely different. The fact was that just at this moment, when this proposal was under consideration, Koltchak made a 100-mile advance! . . . Koltchak made a 100-mile advance, and immediately the entire press of Paris was roaring and screaming on the subject, announcing that Koltchak would be in Moscow within two weeks " (ibid., p. 90).

Mr. Winston Churchill wrote :

" The moment was unpropitious. *Koltchak's armies had just gained notable successes in Siberia* " (*The World Crisis : The Aftermath*, p. 176 : our italics).

Mr. Churchill's brutally frank statement is a cynical commentary on the passage in the Allies' Note to Russia of January 22, 1919, which read : " It is not their [the Allies'] wish or purpose to favour or assist any of the organised groups now contending for the leadership and guidance of Russia as against the others."

The offer made by the Soviets to Mr. Bullitt[1] was not disclosed to the House of Commons at the time ; had it been, the outcry against further armed intervention would have enormously increased in volume, perhaps to such an

[1] Mr. William C. Bullitt is now U.S.A. Ambassador to the Soviet Union.

extent as to have compelled the Allied Governments to accept the proffered terms.

As it was, Mr. Bullitt gave the statesmen of the Peace Conference some trouble. Mr. Churchill tells us : " Bullitt himself was not without some difficulty disowned by those who had sent him " (*The World Crisis : The Aftermath*, p. 176). Mr. Bullitt was " disowned," the terms offered through him to the Allied Governments were withheld from public knowledge, and the Governments whose representatives at Paris were ostensibly devoting all their powers to establishing world peace continued to supply the Russian " Whites " with the wherewithal to keep alive the fires of civil war in Russia.

It will be interesting to take a glance here at the activities of the Tsarist emissaries in London and Paris. Shortly after the cessation of hostilities in Western Europe and when travel by sea had become safer, these gentry gathered in increasing numbers in London and Paris.

The *Daily Telegraph* of December 23, 1918, informed its readers that there had recently been a

> " . . . steady flow of eminent loyal Russians of all parties in the direction of London and Paris for the purpose of setting up an organisation to deal with the Bolshevik problem and to be at hand during the Peace Conference. Prince Lvov, Prime Minister of Russia in 1917, with Baron Korv, Vice-Governor of Finland, and M. Vyrubov, a leading Zemstvo worker, left London on Saturday for Paris. Count Kokovtzov, another ex-Premier of Russia, is leaving London for France and M. Miliukov, an ex-Foreign Minister, is also *en route* for Paris."

What ideas had these remnants of autocracy in their heads regarding the future Government of Russia ? Were they protagonists of a Democratic Republic ? Were they prepared to grant independence to the Border States ?

One would hardly expect that they would open their hearts completely to the peoples of Western Europe and the U.S.A.

at the conclusion of a war which millions of participants fervently believed would " make the world safe for democracy." However, they said sufficient to reveal what was in their minds.

For instance, Count Kokovtsov graciously gave an interview to the *Daily Telegraph* of December 23, 1918, on the subject. The *Daily Telegraph* prefaced the interview as follows :

> " Amongst the statesmen who have taken a leading part in public affairs in Russia during the last ten or fifteen years, and whose names are consequently familiar to students of events in that unhappy country, is Count Kokovtsov. He occupied for a considerable period the office of Finance Minister, and immediately after the assassination of Count Stolypin at Kiev he became Minister President, or Prime Minister of the Government . . . he has lately been paying a visit to London, where he has had an opportunity of meeting a number of his fellow-countrymen."

In the course of the interview the Count said :

> " One thing I cannot understand is the movement in the Baltic States for complete separation from Russia.
>
> " If . . . they were to join hands and set up an independent republic the result would be deplorable, because it would mean that Russia would be deprived of all outlet to the Baltic. That would create an impossible situation : it could not be tolerated that Russia should be throttled in that way."

As to the future form of Government, the Count was naïvely frank ; he said :

> " From my point of view, and from the point of view of any Russian who has at heart the true welfare of his country, the question of the form of Government is not at the moment the chief concern. The really urgent and vital question at present is that of the restoration of order.

> Until you have restored order it is idle to talk of the kind of government you would like to see established. To start with, it is clear that you must have a military dictatorship, and afterwards that might be combined with a business element."

Note the word "might" in the last paragraph. As for democracy, well——

As to intervention, the Count's statement was quite explicit :

> "The work of bringing the Bolsheviks to justice will be done by the Russian forces if only they can receive the backing they ask for, but without intervention we cannot get through, for, while the moderate element exists, it is not concentrated. The result is that the Bolsheviks easily overcome the little bands of heroes who seek to resist them."

In concluding, the Count made some remarkable suggestions ; he declared :

> "I will add only this. If the Allies would supply arms and munitions to the existing Russian armies, and would themselves begin operations against Petrograd and Moscow, they would soon see favourable results. . . . It is only by making the Bolsheviks fight on two or three fronts that they can be soundly beaten, and for that reason I say that an operation conducted on a small scale from Odessa would achieve no practical result."

It will be agreed that the Count did not leave the Allied statesmen in doubt regarding the ideas of the "Whites" as to the future Government of Russia, and regarding what the Tsarists expected from the Allied Governments.

We may add that during the time of the sitting of the Peace Conference in Paris, M. Sazonov, the well-known Tsarist Minister, acted as doyen to the Russian "Ambassadors" gathered in that city.

CHAPTER XII

ALLIES EVACUATE NORTHERN RUSSIA

WE MUST NOW RESUME the trend of our narrative at the point where we left it in Chapter VII, in the bleak frozen regions of Northern Russia, rendered a thousand times more forbidding in the winter of 1918–19 by the foolish and futile policy of the Allies. Sir Henry Wilson (Chief of the Imperial General Staff) in a report to the Secretary of the War Cabinet, dated January 2, 1919, stated that General Maynard had under his command 6,832 British, 731 French, 1,251 Italian, 1,220 Serbian, and 4,441 Russian troops ; and that General Ironside had under his command 6,293 British, 1,686 French, 5,203 American, and 2,715 Russian troops.

General Maynard was in command of the Murmansk area, and on the authority of the report just referred to :

> "Of the above forces about one-half are echeloned at and south of Kandalaksha down the Murman Railway ; our advanced positions at Kem and Soroka being garrisoned by a force of about 3,000" (*The Evacuation of North Russia, 1919*, Cmd. 818, p. 19).

General Ironside was in command of the Archangel area, and on the same authority :

> "His advanced posts are situated at Onega, on the Archangel–Vologda railway (some 100 miles south of Archangel), and on the Dvina River, some 180 miles from the latter place. In addition a small column is operating against scattered bands of Bolsheviks over 100 miles to the east of Archangel" (*The Evacuation of North Russia*, Cmd. 818, p. 20).

Such was the position on January 2, 1919.

Had the Allies announced on that date that they intended withdrawing their troops forthwith, they could have done so. True, the Archangel harbour was frozen over, but Murmansk is an ice-free port, and land communication between Archangel and Murmansk was possible *via* Onega and Soroka.

This is not in doubt. A report submitted to the Secretary of State for War, on January 31, 1919, signed by P. de B. Radcliffe, D.M.O., states :

> " The port of Archangel is now closed by ice for the transport of troops, other than the very few which can be taken in by ice-breakers ; consequently the only means by which reinforcements can reach General Ironside is by the overland route from Soroka, along the shores of the White Sea to Onega. The possibility of doing this depends, as I pointed out to the War Cabinet on the 2nd instant, on General Maynard's maintenance of his hold on Soroka and the positions about Sumski-Posad, immediately to the east of the latter."

If it was physically possible to send reinforcements to Archangel despite the hostility of the Soviet forces, it would surely have been possible to have withdrawn the Allied troops from Archangel to Murmansk in agreement with Moscow. It may be asked, would the Soviet authorities have permitted the Allied troops to depart in peace? The answer is that the Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs not only asked, but even appealed to the Allied Governments to withdraw their forces from Russian soil. The Soviet Government, in a Note dated December 24, 1918, signed by Litvinov, to the Allies, urged the latter " to withdraw the foreign troops from Russian territory " ; and this appeal was endorsed in a cable dated January 12, 1919, signed, " G. Chicherin, Commissar for Foreign Affairs."

Further, about January 1, 1919, W. H. Buckler, attaché of the U.S.A. Embassy in London, was sent to Stockholm

to confer with Litvinov, then in that city. In discussing a general settlement, the question of foreign troops in North Russia arose. There was no doubt about the Soviet attitude :

> " Buckler discussed the matter of the withdrawal of these troops with Litvinov, who said that unquestionably the Bolsheviki would agree to an armistice on the Archangel front at any time " (*Testimony before the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate*, p. 14).

It is unnecessary to labour the point further : the Soviet Government, it is clear, would have been only too delighted to permit the Allied troops to depart from Northern Russia unmolested.

However, after Mr. Bullitt had been disowned by Lloyd George, no further attempt was made during the course of 1919 to effect a peaceful settlement with the Soviets ; recourse was had only to the arbitrament of the sword.

On January 14, 1919, Mr. Winston Churchill succeeded Lord Milner as Secretary of State for War, and one of the items in the inheritance received by the former was the campaign in Northern Russia, no doubt a welcome bequest. Speaking in the House of Commons on March 3, 1919, without a blush on his face, Churchill said :

> " There is an allied army of a certain size—of exactly what size it is not necessary to say—in occupation of considerable regions of North Russia, based on the ports of Murmansk and Archangel. About half this army is Bri sh . . . whatever may be the policy decided upon by the Allies in Paris, our forces in Archangel and Murmansk which, as I have said, are interdependent, will have to stay there until the summer is far advanced. . . . Everyone knows why they were sent. They were sent as part of our operations against Germany.
>
> " That reason has passed away, but the troops sent in obedience to it are still on these wild northern coasts, locked in the depth of winter, and we must neglect nothing required for their safety and well-being."

The implication left on the minds of Churchill's listeners was definite, namely, that the withdrawal of these troops was, and had been since winter set in, a physical impossibility. Then, what of the memorandum signed by " P. de B. Radcliffe " ? This was withheld from the British public until Blue Book, Cmd. 818, was " presented to Parliament by Command of His Majesty " *on July 15, 1920 !*

In the first week of April 1919, the cry went up that " Our forces in Archangel are in grave peril."

The *Daily Express* shouted :

" The Allied force in North Russia, which includes about 13,000 British troops, is in grave peril. Their plight recalls that of Townshend's army at Kut.

" They are vastly outnumbered by the Bolsheviks, who will, it is expected, make determined efforts to push the Allies into the sea. No relief can reach Archangel until the ice melts two months hence, nor can the troops be evacuated before then. American relieving troops are on their way to Murmansk, and a British force is being prepared to follow them."

Commenting editorially, the paper said :

" We want to know clearly and at once who has been responsible for the hare-brained policy which has put this force in peril. Over and over again the *Daily Express* and others have warned the Government against the danger of repeating the tragic blunders of Kut and Gallipoli on the Arctic coast. We must know who sent these crocks in uniform—gallant crocks who will do their duty faithfully —to death or destruction. We must also know exactly what the new policy is to be."

The more ponderous *Daily Telegraph* wrote :

" In military circles the situation of the Allied troops on the northern front of Russia is viewed with considerable anxiety, and the necessity for despatching a relief force is regarded as urgent. A representative of the *Daily Telegraph*

learnt yesterday that an American force is on its way to Murmansk, where General Maynard is the British officer in command, and that British troops are being prepared to follow. But it was pointed out that Archangel is the dominating factor in the situation."

The stately *Times* declared, editorially :

" The cold facts about our military position in Northern Russia (set out in another column) will, we hope, put an end to this cry about withdrawing from Russia. We could not withdraw if we would, for our Army at Archangel is frozen in, and has been since the beginning of last winter. We shall, therefore, want more men for Northern Russia, and, regrettable though this need of reinforcement is, we hope that it will be accepted without opposition."

It is undoubtedly true that at this date withdrawal from Archangel via the shores of the White Sea to the Murmansk Railway was a physical impossibility, but the troops at the distant outposts at which fighting was then proceeding could have been withdrawn to Archangel and Murmansk, respectively, where the Bolsheviks would have left them in peace, if withdrawal were accompanied by an official declaration that the forces would evacuate both ports as soon as climatic conditions would permit. Apparently, as subsequent disclosures revealed, other ideas were in the heads of at least a section of the Cabinet.

The appeal for volunteers was issued to save our forces from " a military disaster." The cry was answered, and two contingents of 4,000 men each were raised and equipped. But were the forces in Archangel really in danger ?

The Special Correspondent of *The Times* in that town did not seem to think so. On April 20, 1919, he cabled his paper from Archangel :

" If there be uncertainty and supineness in the Cabinet about the Russian situation there is nothing of the sort at Archangel. Any alarmist views in England concerning

the fate of Archangel is not shared here, where Easter festival is being observed with traditional reverence ; and modern feasting, extra rationing, and surreptitious hoarding make the festival an event of more significance than the upheaval."

If " Our Special Correspondent " of *The Times* appraised the situation accurately, why were reinforcements necessary ?

General Golovin, a Tsarist officer, supplies the answer. This worthy, acting on behalf of Sazonov, had an interview with the then British Minister for War on May 1, 1919. In the course of his report to Sazonov on his interview with Churchill, Golovin stated :

" The question of giving armed support was for him the most difficult one ; the reason for this was the opposition of the British working class to armed intervention.

" He declared in the House of Commons that fresh forces were necessary for evacuating the North. He would send under this pretext 10,000 volunteers, who would replace the worn-out units, especially the demoralised American and French troops. He would postpone actual evacuation for an indefinite period (but will not speak about this).

" It is very difficult for him to send military forces to the aid of General Denikin because, as far as the North was concerned, he had a pretext—that of supporting the British troops already there.

" He declared, ' I am myself carrying out Admiral Koltchak's orders.' " (This report was published in full on July 3, 1920, in the *Daily News*, *Daily Herald*, and *Manchester Guardian*.)

The first " relief force " arrived in Archangel at the end of May 1919, and immediately Churchill became almost lyrical about the " Archangel Government." Speaking in the House of Commons on May 29, 1919, he said :

" Whereas a few months ago our only plan was to withdraw our troops, and carry with them as refugees 30,000 or 40,000 inhabitants . . . there is now good prospect of the whole of North Russia becoming self-supporting within a reasonable time and of purely Russian forces maintaining themselves against the Bolsheviks in that theatre."

Churchill has been described as an inefficient organiser, a bad strategist, and a worse prophet. Subsequent events in North Russia certainly bear out these strictures. Less than six weeks after the date of that speech, some very portentous happenings occurred south of Archangel. We cannot do better than quote Sir Henry Wilson's report on this subject :

" On 7th July a determined mutiny took place in the 3rd Company of the 1st Bn. Slavo-British Legion and the Machine-Gun Company of the 4th Northern Rifle Regiment, who were in reserve on the right bank of the Dwina. Three British officers and four Russian officers were murdered, and two British and two Russian officers were wounded.

" On 22nd July news was received that the Russian regiment in the Onega district had mutinied, and had handed over the whole Onega front to the Bolsheviks.

" It was realised that the situation at Archangel had changed radically. But for the presence of the two fine brigades of fresh troops, which had recently arrived, the position would indeed have been very critical. As it was, their timely advent relieved the situation of anxiety for the moment. But it was clear that we had failed to create a reliable Russian Army, and, therefore, our hopes of leaving the Russian Government at Archangel in a strong position was unlikely to be realised " (Blue Book, Cmd. 818, p. 12).

Sir Henry attributed the cause of the mutiny to " prisoners who had been sent over by the Bolsheviks for the express purpose of propaganda." From Sir Henry's report it would seem that he was not complaining, no doubt because he would readily admit that propaganda was a legitimate

weapon of warfare. The late Lord Northcliffe was appointed controller of propaganda in enemy countries during the war.

Discontent among the Russians was not confined to the troops, nor were the Bolsheviks alone in carrying on propaganda. *The Times* Correspondent at Murmansk sent a message to his journal, dated April 4, 1919 :

> " Scarcely a day passes in Murmansk without some rumour of premeditated revolt. Life at headquarters has been far from pleasant recently, there is no long stretch of sleep for anyone, and on one occasion the reports of the agents were so convincing that every man at headquarters slept ready for all emergencies. . . . General Maynard may or may not have been impressed by his agents' warning ; anyway, we had a full parade of troops, British, French, Serbs, Americans, and Italians, by way of impressing the polyglot crowd that formed the spectators. There would be little chance of success for the rioters if they attempted anything like an attack. Still, the impressiveness of a parade is always useful " (*The Times*, May 2, 1919).

As to propaganda, *The Times* Special Correspondent at Archangel on April 20, 1919, cabled his paper :

> " General Ironside adopts original methods of propaganda. Bolshevist prisoners are allowed to talk freely with the Russian national army and exchange notes on the relative conditions existing. The army is well fed and clothed, and has not yet evinced a desire to pass over to the Bolshevists.
>
> " Last week civilians here were told firmly :
>
> "' If you wish to join the Bolshevists I will give you three days to decide and I will take you safely to their lines and leave you. If you remain and demonstrate Bolshevist tendencies, you will be dealt with under military law.'
>
> " Ninety-nine accepted the offer, and I saw a convoy of sleighs crossing the estuary. The men were of a type that is indescribable, and Archangel must be purer for the exodus."

Apparently both sides carried on propaganda but the final honours lay with the Bolsheviks.

However, moral suasion was not the only method employed by the Allied Representatives and their " White " protégés. Mr. Ralph Albertson, an American Y.M.C.A. Secretary, who was in North Russia till September 1919, thus describes some of the other methods :

> " The execution of suspects made Bolsheviki right and left. The inquisitorial processes of the Russian puppets of the Military Intervention were necessarily so much like those of the old regime that they went far to dispel all illusions about the Military Intervention that might have remained in the peasant mind when night after ight the firing squad took out its batches of victims. It mattered not that no civilians were permitted on the streets, there were thousands of listening ears to hear the rat-tat-tat of the machine guns and no morning paper could have given all the gruesome details more complete circulation than they received in the regular process of universal news gossip by which Archangel keeps itself in up-to-the-minute touch with all local affairs " (*Fighting Without a War*, by Ralph Albertson, pp. 71–2).

These inhuman and revolting happenings were at that time carefully hidden from the world.

The campaign in Northern Russia became steadily more and more unpopular as the summer of 1919 wore on, but the idea of keeping the British troops there throughout another winter, with which a number of Ministers were flirting, was given the *coup de grâce* by Lieut.-Colonel Sherwood-Kelly. Over his name the following self-explanatory letter appeared in the columns of the *Daily Express* on September 6, 1919 :

"I have just returned from North Russia under circumstances which compel me to seek the earliest possible opportunity of making known in England certain facts in connection with North Russia which otherwise might never come to light.

"I wish to state that in so doing I am actuated by no personal motives, but solely by considerations of public policy.

"I know that my action will render me liable to professional penalties, and will prejudice my future in the Army, but I am prepared to take all risks in carrying out what I know to be my duty to my country and to my men.

"I volunteered for service with the North Russian Relief Force in the sincere belief that relief was urgently needed in order to make possible the withdrawal of low category troops, in the last stages of exhaustion, due to the fierce fighting amid the rigours of an Arctic winter.

"The wide advertisement of this relief expedition led myself and many others to believe that affairs in North Russia were about to be wound up in an efficient and decisive manner. And we were proud to be accorded the privilege of sharing in such an undertaking.

"I was placed in command of the 2nd Battalion the Hampshire Regiment, in the brigade commanded by Brigadier-General Grogan, C.V., C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.

"Immediately on arrival at Archangel, however, towards the end of May, I received the impression that the policy of the authorities was not what it was stated to be.

"This impression hardened as time went on, and during the months of June and July I was reluctantly but inevitably driven to the following conclusion :

"That the troops of the Relief Forces which we were told had been sent out purely for defensive purposes, were being used for offensive purposes, on a large scale and far in the interior, in furtherance of some ambitious plan of campaign the nature of which we were not allowed to know. My personal experience of those operations was that they were not even well conducted,

and that they were not calculated to benefit in a military or any other sense a sound and practical British policy in Russia.

"They only entailed useless loss and suffering on troops that had already made incalculable sacrifices in the great war.

"I discovered, what is now a matter of common knowledge even in England, that the much vaunted 'loyal Russian Army,' composed largely of Bolshevik prisoners dressed in khaki, was utterly unreliable, always disposed to mutiny, and that it always constituted a greater danger to our troops than the Bolshevik armies opposed to them.

"This was tragically demonstrated early in July, when the Russians mutinied and murdered their British officers.

"I formed the opinion that the puppet-Government set up by us in Archangel rested on no basis of public confidence and support, and would fall to pieces the moment the protection of British bayonets was withdrawn.

"At the same time I saw British money poured out like water and invaluable British lives sacrificed in backing up this worthless army and in keeping in power this worthless Government, and I became convinced that my duty to my country lay not in helping to forward a mistaken policy, but in exposing it to the British public."

We would in particular draw our readers' attention to the statement: "I formed the opinion that the puppet-Government set up by us in Archangel rested on no basis of public confidence and support."

As can be imagined, Colonel Sherwood-Kelly's letter created a great sensation at the time, but he was not content with creating a momentary sensation as he was seriously apprehensive that our Government, despite their public and solemn pledges, would conjure up some pretext or other to keep the British forces in Northern Russia through the following winter. The Colonel sent a message to the Trades Union Congress (which met in Glasgow on the following week) through the columns of the *Daily Herald*, stating :

"Tell the T.U. Congress that I wish them a speedy and successful conclusion to all their domestic troubles. But ask them not to forget their Brothers Across the Sea. They must get our men out of North Russia ; and they must get them out quick, or it will be too late."

We would underline the words "*or it will be too late.*"

Fortunately, it was not too late. The Trades Union Congress—at that time representing about 8,000,000 members—enthusiastically responded with a strongly worded resolution which was soon followed by a very desirable but unexpected consummation in connection with the remaining portion of the "Relief Force."

The cold dry language of the Blue Book tells us :

"On 12th September, in view of the favourable situation, General Rawlinson was able to say that the second echelon, consisting of one battalion and two machine-gun companies, would not be required to leave England" (Blue Book, Cmd. 818, p. 17).

This sequence of events is so important and embraces such a momentous moral that it is advisable to repeat the narration in diary form :

September 6th, 1919. Colonel Sherwood-Kelly's indictment appeared in the *Daily Express*.

September 8, 1919. Trades Union Congress opened in Glasgow.

September 9, 1919. Colonel Sherwood-Kelly's appeal to the T.U.C. published in the *Daily Herald*.

September 11, 1919. Strong resolution passed unanimously by the T.U.C., representing 8,000,000 organised workers, calling on the Government to withdraw all British troops from Russia.

September 12, 1919. General Rawlinson discovered "that the second echelon . . . would not be required to leave England."

True, the sequence of events may have been merely coincidental, but . . .

However that may be, events moved with pleasing rapidity during the next four weeks, and by September 27th the evacuation of Archangel, and by October 12, 1919, the evacuation of Murmansk, had been completed.

Even the *Morning Post*, which had been a persistent protagonist of intervention in North Russia, found the facts too strong for it. At any rate, it published the following in its columns of September 16, 1919 :

"A member of the British Force who has been serving in Archangel and elsewhere in the North of Russia, interviewed yesterday by a *Morning Post* representative, said that when he went out in the early summer of last year the troops were assured that on reaching Murmansk and Archangel 50,000 Russians would be waiting their arrival ready to share in any campaign. They took out on the transport uniforms and arms for these anticipated recruits, but none presented themselves except a few Chinamen, Mongolians, and invalids, who hoped to get a little food. Day after day an American band used to parade playing martial airs to assist recruiting, but the result was practically negligible. When the Russians were conscripted the real trouble began. The Russians were entirely apathetic, content with a few cigarettes and a piece of black bread. Compelled to be soldiers they were a positive danger to the British troops. They were all for the Bolsheviks, to whom they deserted wholesale. Bolshevist soldiers would also desert to the British and return to their comrades as soon as they had thoroughly learned machine-gun use.

"All the time there were threats of risings. Archangel seems to have been a hotbed of conspiracy, the intention being to hand over the place to the Bolsheviks. Sometimes a Russian battalion would mutiny and order had to be restored by machine-gun fire from the British troops."

Our readers will notice that this statement is a virtual endorsement of Colonel Sherwood-Kelly's indictment.

Our forces were out of Northern Russia, but that was not quite the end of the chapter. The Blue Book from which we quoted above informs us that " after our departure " the White Forces " were left amply provided with arms, ammunition and equipment of every sort."

Winston Churchill, in his book published over nine years after the events just narrated, made some rather pointed comments respecting his protégés, the " White " Russians. He wrote : " The 25 to 30,000 armed and trained local troops whom the Allies had organised could not be trusted as an aid, and must indeed be reckoned as a peril " (*The World Crisis : The Aftermath*, p. 240).

Some reader may ask about the morale of the Red Troops facing the Allies and the " Whites." Blue Book, Cmd. 818, tells us on p. 23 :

> " The Bolshevik troops on this front may be considered to be reliable. ' The Bolshevik organisation and system of command have shown a marked improvement in the recent operations.' "

Not very extravagant praise, but it is a reasonable deduction that the morale of the Red Army was far superior to that of the " White." The (from the point of view of the Allies) utterly futile campaign in Northern Russia was costly to both sides in life and material :

> " The total casualties (killed, died, wounded and missing) sustained by British forces in North Russia from the commencement of the campaign in the spring of 1918 to the evacuation in October 1919, were 106 officers, 877 other ranks, including 41 officers and 286 other ranks killed " (ibid., p. 18).

According to the same authoritative source considerable damage was inflicted on the Bolsheviks during the course of the campaign ; one paragraph reads :

> " On 10th August, in pursuance of the policy previously authorised, General Sadleir-Jackson's brigade and Russian troops attacked the enemy's positions on the River Dwina. The attack was completely successful. All objectives were taken and six enemy battalions accounted for, the men composing them being either killed, captured or dispersed. The total captures amounted to over 2,000 prisoners, 18 guns and many machine guns. The advance ended with the capture of Puchega and Borok situated 20 miles from our original position. The naval flotilla co-operated most effectively in the attack, not only carrying out bombardments and mine-sweeping, but also providing Naval and Marine landing parties " (ibid., p. 17).

The Blue Book is significantly silent on one particularly ghastly practice of the " Whites," namely, the butchering in cold blood of Red Army prisoners of war, although the British High Command in Northern Russia cannot but have been aware of the facts.

However, although every attempt has been made to keep these shocking occurrences from the knowledge of the British public, they are widely known in the U.S.A., thanks to the courage of Mr. Albertson, from whom we have already quoted. In his book, *Fighting Without a War*, he also wrote :

> " I have heard an officer tell his men repeatedly to take no prisoners, to kill them even if they came in unarmed, and I have been told by the men themselves of many cases when this was done.
>
> " I saw a disarmed Bolshevik prisoner, who was making no attempt to escape and no trouble of any kind, and who was alone in charge of three armed soldiers, shot down in cold blood. The official whitewash on this case was that he was trying to escape.
>
> " I have heard of many other cases of the shooting of Bolshevik prisoners. At one time this had become so common that the Officer Commanding troops issued and had posted up an order forbidding it and calling attention to

the fact that there were many Bolshevik soldiers who wanted to come over and give themselves up but feared to do so because they had heard about our shooting prisoners, and warning our men that the Bolsheviki might retaliate by shooting our men whom they held as prisoners" (pp. 86–7).

"We used gas shells on the Bolsheviki, but that I understand is no longer an atrocity. We fixed all the devil-traps we could think of for them when we evacuated villages. Once we shot more than thirty prisoners in our determination to punish three murderers. And when we caught the Commissar of Borok, a sergeant tells me we left his body in the street, stripped, with sixteen bayonet wounds. We surprised Borok, and the Commissar, a civilian, did not have time to arm himself. The sergeant was quite exultant over it" (pp. 88–9).

"We have been told about the employment by the Bolsheviki of Chinese mercenaries, and the dreadfulness of this was much stressed in April, but in July, August and September *we were importing large numbers of Chinese to Archangel, dressing them in British uniforms, and training them for fighting the Bolsheviki*" (pp. 89–90 : our italics).

Mr. Albertson's charges were widely quoted at the time of their publication but, as far as we are aware, they have never been challenged or contradicted.

What happened in Northern Russia immediately after the withdrawal of our forces? Winston Churchill tells us : "The sequel was melancholy. In a few weeks General Miller's [the "White" Commander] resistance was extinguished; the Soviet Government re-established its rule on the shores of the White Sea" (p. 244, *The World Crisis*).

So ended one of the most senseless and unnecessary campaigns in which any British Government ever participated.

CHAPTER XIII

THE BALTIC STATES, GENERAL YUDENITCH, AND THE SOVIET

IT IS NO EASY TASK to disentangle the very bewildering sequence of events in the territories of the Baltic Border States between the end of the World War and the autumn of 1920.

At the date of the Armistice in Western Europe these States were in effective occupation by Germany, but under the terms of the Peace Treaty, the Wilhelmstrasse agreed to evacuate the provinces, just as it agreed to withdraw from the Caucasus, the Ukraine, Poland, and France.

However, a big surprise was in store for the German troops who were gradually withdrawing from the Baltic States : they were peremptorily ordered to keep their lines for fear that their retreat would be followed by an advance of the Red Army.

The Times, in somewhat milder terms, relates what occurred. Referring to the German Army in occupation of the Baltic States at the time of the Armistice, it informed its readers :

"The Allies at the time of the Armistice endeavoured to make use of this army of occupation as a protection for Western Europe against the Bolshevists, and did not stipulate for an immediate evacuation, as there were then no local forces considered capable of making head against Bolshevist aggression" (*The Times*, October 27, 1919).

"Did not stipulate for an immediate evacuation"! Foch's instructions were in much sterner terms.

When it was found that the German troops there at the time were inadequate for the task, more were transported

from Germany : Rear-Admiral Cowan (who commanded the British naval forces in the Baltic from January 6, 1919, till February 9, 1920), in his report to the Admiralty, stated :

" When I arrived the German situation was as follows : German Troops were nominally in occupation of Latvia, with Headquarters at Libau.

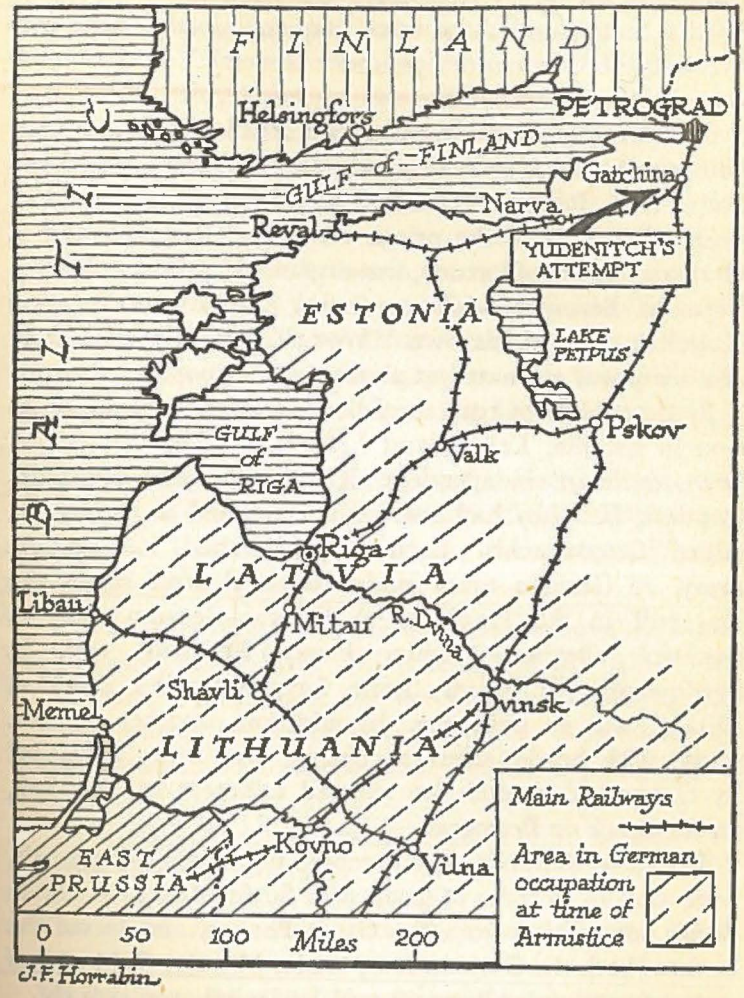
" The Bolsheviks were in Riga, and gradually advancing South and West.

" Shortly after this (at the end of February), large German reinforcements began to arrive by sea, and General-Major Graf Von der Goltz assumed command at Libau, and very soon afterwards stabilised the situation, and drove the Bolsheviks well East again—and this, so far, was satisfactory " (Fifth Supplement to the *London Gazette*, April 6, 1920).

The Allies, immediately after the cessation of hostilities in Western Europe and even before peace was signed with the Central Powers, not only sought the aid of German forces but actually ordered the co-operation of these troops in opposition to the hated Bolsheviks. The Allies apparently had determined to get on with " the war that mattered."

However, although the German commanders and many German soldiers-of-fortune had no objection to opposing the Red Army, they had ideas of their own as to the future of the Baltic States. *The Times* report quoted above states further :

" The Germans, however, tried to utilise their presence, almost as the mandatories of the Allies in the Baltic States, to establish themselves politically and provide for a future to be directed by the local German-speaking Balts, the descendants of centuries of German colonists along the Baltic shore, under German control and in German interests, whom the Estonians dislike and mistrust " (*The Times*, October 27, 1919).



Needless to say, this tendency on the part of the Germans was not at all to the liking of the Allied Governments or of Sazonov and his compatriots in Paris. It was equally distasteful to the newly established Governments of the Baltic Border States, and there were frequent bloody encounters between the German troops under General Von der Goltz, and those of Estonia, etc.

Concurrently with these events a Russian-German army composed of Russian soldiers who had trekked to the Baltic States from Russia, of Russian prisoners of war who had been released from the prison camps in Germany, and of German soldiers of fortune, was organised by Prince Avalov-Bermont. Bermont, whilst protesting allegiance to Admiral Koltchak, formed his own " West Russian Government." His army was estimated at about 15,000 troops.

By the middle of 1919 the following was briefly the situation in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania : these States had been declared independent Republics, with undefined frontiers, but they had not been recognised *de jure* by the Allied Governments. Each Republic had its separate army. A German army under General Von der Goltz was still in the Provinces. A Russian-German army of doubtful allegiance, under Prince Bermont, with its headquarters at Shavli (some forty-five miles south of Mitau), was in existence. In addition, another Russian army, with headquarters at Narva, was being organised by General Yudenitch, an avowed adherent of Koltchak, for an attack on Petrograd.

The three Republics had accepted the Prinkipo proposals, were anxious to come to terms with Soviet Russia, to obtain *de jure* recognition from the Great Powers, and to see the backs of both the German army under Von der Goltz and of armed forces under Bermont and Yudenitch, respectively.

On the other hand, General Von der Goltz was hoping that somehow, as Western Europe was war weary, Germany would be allowed to retain her hold on the three provinces, which would to some extent compensate her for her territorial

losses in Europe. Yudenitch was a Tsarist, acting under Koltchak's orders, unrelentingly hostile to the idea of the separation of the Baltic States from Russia.

At this time there was a large British fleet in the Baltic. The precise strength of that fleet was never disclosed, but the *Daily Herald* Correspondent cabled his paper on October 27, 1919, from Stockholm to the effect that he had been authoritatively informed that the British fleet consisted of sixty-five warships, to say nothing of transports for conveying " White " troops and munitions, and an air fleet for scouting and bombing.

The aim of the British fleet in the Baltic was twofold : to support the " Whites " and oppose the Bolsheviks ; and to prevent the unfortunate Baltic States, bleeding from a thousand wounds, from making peace with Soviet Russia. The events related below prove the latter contention to the hilt.

In May 1919, Lieut.-General Sir H. Gough was sent to the Baltic at the head of a military mission. Replying to Commander Kenworthy in the House of Commons, Winston Churchill, Minister for War, said that :

> " The mission was sent out in consequence of the agreement arrived at with the other principal Allied and Associated Powers that the execution of Allied military policy should be under British control. General Gough was responsible for carrying out the Allied policy agreed upon.
>
> " General Gough and all the officers of his mission were under the War Office."

The sequel, as we shall see in the course of a few pages, was hardly to the taste of Mr. Churchill.

In the meantime, in March and April 1919, articles appeared in our Conservative Press urging that the speediest route to the overthrow of the Soviet régime ran from Finland to Petrograd, and that the man to blaze the trail was General Yudenitch, who was then resident in Finland. For

instance, *The Times* of April 17, 1919, published a lengthy article, " From a Correspondent," from which we take the following excerpts :

> " Past history has proved that Russia is not an easy country to invade from any frontier distant from her capital.
>
> " Admittedly the ultimate objective of military expeditions to Russia is the occupation of Petrograd and Moscow. Petrograd and Moscow are the twin heads of the Bolshevist snake. To stand on the tail of a snake in the hope of killing it is worse than beating the wind. It is an invitation to disaster.
>
> " So far as stamping out the Bolshevist is concerned we might as well send expeditions to Honolulu as to the White Sea.
>
> " If we look at the map we shall find that the best approach to Petrograd is from the Baltic, and that the shortest and easiest route is through Finland, whose frontiers are only about 30 miles distant from the Russian capital. Finland is the key to Petrograd and Petrograd is the key to Moscow.
>
> " In Finland the man around whom all anti-Bolshevist movements centre at the moment is General Yudenitch."

In the course of the same article, the Correspondent had the temerity to indulge in prophecy :

> " With the fullest information possible I predict that if a considerable British force appeared in the Baltic with a formidable naval accompaniment it would not be necessary to fire a single shot to occupy Petrograd itself."

Apparently the Finns had taken the measure of Yudenitch more accurately than *The Times*, and declined to allow their territory to be used as a base for an attack on Petrograd. Yudenitch next transferred his headquarters to Narva, in Estonia. The Government of that country was as reluctant to receive him as the Finns were delighted to see his back,

but the Allies bullied the Government of the tiny Republic into acquiescence.

Russian " Whites " scattered throughout Finland and Sweden were conveyed in Allied transports to Narva, and equipped with Allied munitions preparatory to an attack on Petrograd.

Apparently it occurred to the Allied Powers that as there were " Governments " in Archangel, South Russia, and Siberia, General Yudenitch ought also, willy-nilly, to be presented with a " Government."

A bald announcement appeared in *The Times* that a new " North-Western Provisional Government " had been formed, but no details were vouchsafed as to whether it was elected or how it had come into being. However, we were not long left in doubt on that subject. In 1920 a pamphlet was published in Helsingfors, entitled " How the North-Western Government was organised," signed by Kuzmin-Karavayev Kartashev (procurator of the Holy Synod under Kerensky), and Suvorov (a General of the old Russian army), both of whom refused to become members of the " Government." They relate :

> " From the 24th of May to the 12th of August, 1919, we served as members of the Political Council and participated closely in the solution of all political problems in connection with the attempt to overthrow the Soviet authority in Russia. On August 10, 1919, we were urgently summoned to the British Consulate in Reval where there were present : General Marsh, with the members of the British Mission, representatives of the American and French missions, the correspondent of *The Times*, Mr. Pollock, the Secretary of the Department of Foreign Relations, Barsach, and the following Russians besides the writer, Kruzenstern, Alexandrov, Marguiles, Filippeo, Lianozov, Horn, and Ivanov.
>
> " General Marsh, speaking in Russian, said that in view of the situation of the army it is necessary to organise a

government. He suggested that without leaving the room we should organise a democratic government which the same day should conclude a treaty with the Estonian Government. Whereupon he read the text of the treaty which was to be concluded. It was now 6.20 p.m. He turned over to Suvorov the text of the treaty with the Estonians as well as a list of individuals whom he suggested to compose the government, and said that if by 7 o'clock the government is not organised 'We will quit.' After this the general with the other foreign representatives left, saying that he would return at 7 o'clock for an answer."

However, General Marsh magnanimously extended the period till the following morning when the declaration was duly signed and the General greeted "the newly organised Government."

The veracity of the two signatories was confirmed by Major-General Vandam (Yudenitch's Chief of Staff), who in a letter in *The Times* of March 10, 1920, stated that the North-Western Government was "organised by General Marsh in 45 minutes' time." It will be remembered that at this period the Soviet Government was being denounced in the Conservative Press as *undemocratic*!

The North-Western Government having been duly established preparations for a grand attack on Petrograd were speeded up. The British Navy was to take a hand: the Correspondent of the *Morning Post* cabled his paper from Stockholm on August 19, 1919:

"In connection with the general offensive against Petrograd, which it is believed will take place shortly, four big British destroyers, three light cruisers, and one Dreadnought have arrived in the Gulf of Finland. The last named vessel is to be stationed at Reval, where the British transport ship *Dania*, with troops and war material, has already arrived. About 20 tanks have been discharged and forwarded to the Estonian front."

According to the same cable, other arms of the fighting services had already got busy:

"According to messages from Finland, British aviators and motor vessels last night again attacked Kronstadt. The shore batteries replied."

How were the Baltic Border States and Russia reacting to these sinister developments?

Moscow repeated its readiness to negotiate peace, and the Baltic Border States were eager to accept the offer: the *Morning Post* published a cable from its Stockholm Correspondent dated September 20, 1919, reading:

"The war-stricken and harassed Estonians, Letts, and Lithuanians evidently found the Bolshevist bait too tempting."

Three days later, the same Correspondent sent a further cable to his journal, declaring:

"According to telegrams from Reval, the representatives of the Entente Commission have declared to Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania that *their independence cannot be acknowledged by the Peace Conference if they conclude peace with the Bolsheviks*" (our italics).

Further, the *Manchester Guardian* of September 25, 1919, published the following two cables:

"Copenhagen, *Wednesday*.

"According to the Lett Information Bureau, the Congress of Finnish, Estonian, Lett and Lithuanian Socialists at Riga has passed a resolution in favour of the acceptance of the Soviet Government's peace offer."

"Helsingfors, *Wednesday*.

"A Congress of Finnish, Estonian, Livonian, and Lithuanian Socialists at Riga has passed a resolution asking for the influence of the Entente Labour parties to be exercised to prevent the Allies from hindering the peace negotiations."

The threat of the Allied Governments had the desired effect from their own point of view, and the Baltic States one after the other were forced to declare that they had no intention of proceeding with the peace negotiations.

On October 11, 1919, Yudenitch's grand attack was launched on a wide front, and at first it met with striking success. Two days later Krasnoye Selo was captured, and on October 16, Gatchina was occupied :

The moment for the attack, from the point of view of the "Whites" and their backers, had been well chosen : Koltchak was recovering some lost ground in Siberia, Deniken was meeting with considerable success in the south. On October 13, 1919, his troops entered Orel within 200 miles of Moscow. The *Daily Telegraph*, possibly reflecting the opinion of our Foreign Office, was jubilant, and it declared :

> "From the Bolshevik point of view the military situation in Russia is held in official quarters to have taken a decided change for the worse, owing to the advance of General Yudenitch's army towards Petrograd and Denikin's continued success in the direction of Moscow. Successful advances are being made on the Southern and Eastern fronts by Koltchak, as well as by Denikin, and the extremely threatening proximity of the latter to Moscow will oblige the Bolsheviks to concentrate every available man against him. The more serious attack, however, is against Petrograd, where anti-Bolshevik feeling always runs high, and where the opposing forces on entering would find a large field of recruitment, and the loss of which would be a fatal blow to the prestige of the Soviet Government. If the present pressure long continues, the military collapse of Bolshevik Russia is highly probable" (*Daily Telegraph*, October 16, 1919).

On October 18, 1919, *The Times* and other dailies published the following message from Copenhagen dated the previous day :

> "Messages reporting that General Yudenitch has entered Petrograd and that Kronstadt has surrendered have been received here, but hitherto they have not been corroborated."

The *Morning Post* among others printed this report, but almost immediately afterwards it was compelled to admit sorrowfully that it had been hoaxed. From its Special Correspondents it published the following messages :

> "Paris, *Sunday*.
>
> "No confirmation has been received so far in official quarters here of the reports according to which Yudenitch is already in possession of Petrograd. Moreover, official telegrams from Helsingfors and Stockholm which have reached the Ministry of Foreign Affairs state that false news concerning the capture of Petrograd has been deliberately published in Finnish and Swedish papers in order to favour certain financial dealings with which is associated the name of a certain financier. The expected result has been obtained. Yesterday on the Stock Exchange at Stockholm there was a sharp rise in the value of the Russian rouble, 100 roubles being quoted at 13 crowns instead of seven, while the Finnish mark rose from 15.75 to 18.50."
>
> "Helsingfors, *Saturday* (*noon*).
>
> "The false rumours circulated in Helsingfors of the fall of Petrograd on Oct. 16 caused a 100 per cent rise in the local exchange value of roubles, and also a 10 per cent rise in Finnish marks. The rouble rate is now steady, and the rouble equals the Finnish mark."

Commenting on these reports in a leading article, the journal declared :

> "In the present case it is not improbable that the reports were circulated in Stockholm by persons desirous of influencing the local Bourse to their own advantage."

Although these reports were untrue, the clouds had certainly rapidly lowered over Petrograd and Moscow, but they dispersed even more rapidly than they had gathered. On October 22, 1919, when the " Whites " were within eight miles of Petrograd, the Red Army counter-attacked and drove Yudenitch rapidly back. On the same day, it was officially reported in the British Press that Orel had been retaken from Denikin, and two days later it was also officially reported that Tobolsk (which had been in the possession of Koltchak since October 6, 1919), had been recaptured by the Red Army.

The tide had now turned decisively in favour of the Soviets on all fronts. The question naturally arises " Why ? " In answer we are content to quote the Lord Emmott Report :

> " Under Denikin and Koltchak . . . the peasants were subject to requisition and rose in periodical revolt, and their risings in the rear of both were a decisive factor in the overthrow of the White Russian forces " (p. 74).

As regards Yudenitch, his retreat rapidly degenerated into a rout, and within a fortnight from the date on which he had started his advance his army had been driven across the Estonian frontier.

On October 28, 1919, the Special Correspondent of the *Morning Post* at Helsingfors cabled his paper that the entire operation of Yudenitch " has resulted in failure, if not something worse."

Three questions must be answered here, viz. : " Who equipped Yudenitch ? " " What part did the British Navy play ? " " What damage was inflicted on Soviet Russia ? "

The answer to the first question does not admit of any doubt. A glance at the Press of that period makes clear the fact that the Allies supplied Yudenitch with the military equipment, stores, finance, and transport which made his attack on Petrograd possible. Some thousands of troops had been transferred from Archangel to Estonia to strengthen Yudenitch's forces.

As to the second question.—In April 1920, an official despatch from Rear-Admiral Sir Walter Cowan, describing operations in the Baltic from January 1919 to February 1920, was published as a Supplement to the *London Gazette*. The report states :

> " At the beginning of the campaign the enemy's active Naval Force appeared to be :
>
> 2 Battleships (1 Dreadnought, *Petropavlovsk* ; 1 *Andrei Pervozvanni*) ;
> 1 Cruiser (*Oleg*) ;
> 5 Destroyers (*Novik* class) ;
> 2 to 4 Submarines, and perhaps
> 4 smaller coal-burning Torpedo Boats, besides
> — Minesweepers.
>
> " Of these :
>
> 2 Battleships (*Petropavlovsk* and *Andrei Pervozvanni*) were torpedoed and disabled in Kronstadt Harbour, and have not moved since—except *Andrei Pervozvanni* into dock ;
> 1 Cruiser (*Oleg*) was torpedoed and sunk at her moorings off Kronstadt ;
> 3 Destroyers (*Novik* class), *Azard*, *Gavril*, and *Constantin*, were sunk, two of them by our mines, and the other either by mine or torpedo ;
> 1 Patrol Vessel (armed), *Kitoboi*, which surrendered on the night of 14th–15th June ;
>
> " and, I think,
>
> 2 Submarines, one by depth charge and the other by mine.
>
> " Besides this :
>
> 1 Oiler was bombed and badly damaged ;
> A number of Motor Launches were set on fire and destroyed ;
>
> " and
>
> 1 Submarine Depôt Ship (*Pamiet Azov*) was torpedoed and sunk ;

" all in Kronstadt Harbour.

An Oil Fuel Store and a very large quantity of wood and coal fuel were also burnt."

A Russian report referring to the aid given by Admiral Cowan to Yudenitch during the attack on Petrograd stated, " Three of our torpedo-boats were sunk by mines during a night expedition, carrying down with them 550 young seamen."

As to the third question, the London Conservative Press published at the time some arresting reports :

" The prisoners taken by the Whites in the last few days are so numerous that it is impossible to provide for them. . . . *Only 27 of the Red commissars taken have been shot* " (our italics) (*The Times*, October 27, 1919).

" During their retreat Yudenitch's troops were able to carry off or destroy everything which could be useful to the enemy. If necessary the bridges, railways, and even the villages can be destroyed. *All the Soviet commissaries captured by the army were executed.* The army captured altogether 12,000 men, and the Reds lost during the fights round Petrograd some 6,000 killed and wounded " (our italics) (*Daily Telegraph*, November 17, 1919).

The *Daily Herald's* Reval Correspondent cabled his paper from that town :

" Neutral witnesses of the fighting state that the White losses are small. . . . On the other hand, the Red losses are large. Yudenitch's superiority in heavy artillery, supplied by the British, enabled him to inflict severe losses in their ranks before retiring " (*Daily Herald*, November 3, 1919).

A fortnight later, the Special Correspondent of *The Times* at Helsingfors cabled :

" Altogether General Yudenitch lost about 4,000 in killed and wounded, inflicted losses of 6,000 in killed and wounded " (*The Times*, November 17, 1919).

The reader may ask what was the attitude of Finland and Estonia towards Yudenitch's attack on Petrograd. The answer is contained in the following cable :

" According to a Helsingfors telegram, the Finns have not only declined to support General Yudenitch, but have also refused a request from the Whites on the Murman front, who are being strongly pressed by the Reds since the British withdrawal.

" General Laidoner, Commander-in-Chief of the Estonian Army, in a statement to the special correspondent of the *Berlingske Tidende*, said that much depended upon Finland's attitude. With regard to Estonian support of General Yudenitch, the difficulty was that Admiral Koltchak did not recognise the independence of the Baltic border States. The Estonian peasant soldier could not consequently understand why he should fight the Bolshevists, who proclaimed their readiness to recognise Estonian independence " (*The Times*, October 29, 1919).

In passing it may be noted that Koltchak, " the Supreme Ruler," was emphatic in refusing to recognise the independence of the Baltic Border States, and in this attitude he was consistently supported by *The Times*. That journal, in a leading article on November 4, 1919, declared :

" They [the Baltic Border States] cannot stand by themselves absolutely independent and sovereign States, and the Allies and Associates would be physically unable to maintain them as such States."

The Times returned to the subject on November 19, 1919, and in another leader argued that " the solution of the Russian problem as a whole " resided in " the establishment of a United States of Russia affording the fullest play for autonomous local nationalism within the framework of the unified Russian State "—of course under a Koltchak-Denikin leadership. Were these leaders in *The Times* inspired by

Sazonov from Paris via our Foreign Office? The Baltic Border States evidently believed that this was so.

It is now necessary to return to the ill-fated and ill-omened Yudenitch. That defeated General had been permitted to retreat together with his demoralised army into Estonia on condition that his troops were disarmed as soon as they had crossed the frontier. The Reval Correspondent of *The Times* sent a report to his paper, dated November 25, 1919, headed "End of Yudenitch's Army," and the cable concluded: "General Yudenitch will remain in Estonia as representative of Admiral Koltchak's Government."

Some of Yudenitch's troops deserted to the Red Army, some were incorporated in the Estonian Army, some were transferred by Allied transports to Denikin, and a large number died of disease.

Meanwhile, Yudenitch was busy looking after number one. The *Daily Herald* published the following from its Helsingfors Correspondent:

> "General Yudenitch was arrested in Reval yesterday by officers of his own army, on the charge of misappropriation of funds of the North-Western Government on the eve of his departure for France. An adjutant attempted a rescue, revolver in hand, but was disarmed, and the General is still detained" (*Daily Herald*, January 31, 1920).

And on the same day *The Times* printed the following:

> "The Estonian Legation in London is officially informed that the adherents of General Balahovitch desired to convey General Yudenitch to Dorpat secretly. The Estonian Government interfered, the train being stopped and General Yudenitch set free.
>
> "The reason given for the imprisonment of General Yudenitch was his dismissal of the North-West Army without means of subsistence. The departure of General Yudenitch is postponed" (*The Times*, January 31, 1920).

Naturally, the Allied Governments could not allow a henchman of their own to suffer for his crimes. The Reval Correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* gave us the sequel:

> "After the arrest, in the early hours of the 28th, Yudenitch was sent off under guard in a special waggon, apparently to Ostate, where other Russian officers are under arrest, but the train was stopped and Yudenitch released, at the request, as stated, of the Allied Missions" (*Manchester Guardian*, February 2, 1920).

The Correspondent in the same cable informed the world that there are "frequent complaints in the Russian Press that English money remained in the hands of the generals."

A month later Yudenitch vanished from the scene, not exactly in a blaze of glory, as described in the following messages:

> "Reuter's Agency has received communication from the Lettish Press Bureau of the following telegram despatched from Riga on February 27:
>
> "'The Latvian Government has given permission to General Yudenitch and to some high officers of his staff to proceed to Paris, via Libau. The party intends to stay at Riga for a few days.'"
>
> "Copenhagen, *February 28*.
>
> "The Reval correspondent of the *Berlinske Tidende* telegraphs that the North-West Russian army is now completely disbanded and all its affairs, so far as the Estonian Government is concerned, are settled. The correspondent adds that General Yudenitch and his leading generals left the country in a motor-car, which crossed the frontier under the British flag.
>
> "Twelve thousand men of the North-West army are suffering from typhus, and 24,000 refugees are left to the care of Estonia.—Reuter" (*Manchester Guardian*, March 1, 1920).

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Meanwhile other important episodes were being enacted in the Baltic Border States. In the middle of November 1919, Avalov-Bermont was heavily defeated by Lettish troops supported by the British fleet. His army immediately afterwards rapidly disintegrated : the Germans retreated into Germany, whilst the Russians joined Yudenitch's troops in their internment camps.

With regard to the troops of Von der Goltz—as the year 1919 wore on the Allies discovered that although the German troops in the Baltic Border States were at times useful, they were also dangerous, and they requested Berlin to withdraw the forces. Berlin issued the necessary orders but the army on the shores of the Baltic took no notice. More communications passed between the Allies and Germany but the troops remained obdurate. Finally, early in October 1919, the Allies sent a very stiff note to Germany peremptorily ordering immediate evacuation and announcing the nomination of a " general officer appointed by the Allied and Associated Governments " to supervise the execution of the necessary measures. Immediately afterwards General Mangin was nominated to the task and events then began to move rapidly : the Fifth Supplement to the *London Gazette* reported : " All German troops were back in Prussia by December 15th, 1919."

The defeat of Yudenitch was swiftly followed by the rout of Denikin and the collapse of Koltchak (with which we shall deal in later chapters) and the combination of these events blasted the immediate hopes of the " Whites." The Berlin Correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* cabled on November 28, 1919 :

> " The capture of Omsk by the Bolsheviks and the evacuation of Kiev by General Denikin put an end to our hopes for Russia so far as this year is concerned. An early winter is upon us, and serious operations in the direction of Moscow will be put out of the question before the spring."

Meanwhile, General Sir Hubert Gough had returned to this country from the Baltic, and began to denounce in forcible terms the Allied policy towards Russia. In the course of an article in the December issue of the *Oxford Review* he declared that to continue rendering aid to the " White " Generals would " cause the indefinite and long prolongation of a bloody war and economic ruin." He also stated in the course of the same article :

> " Without being actually Bolshevik in their political creed the Russians are determined to prevent the return to power of the old official classes, and if forced to a choice, which is what is actually happening at the moment, they prefer the Bolshevik Government."

Simultaneous with these occurrences, the desire of the Baltic Border States to make peace with their eastern neighbour grew rapidly stronger, and on December 4, 1919, the Russo-Estonian peace conference opened at Reval. Four days later *The Times* Correspondent cabled :

> " So far the negotiations at Dorpat have been between the Bolshevists and Estonians only. The Letts are watching developments. The Lithuanian delegates are expected to-morrow. Representatives of Finland and Poland are present solely to report events."

It was evident that the other States were feeling their way towards the opening of peace negotiations but were still hesitant, dreading the frowns of London and Paris.

Here, General Sir Hubert Gough again appeared on the scene : in the course of a letter to the Press dated January 10, 1920, he asserted :

> " In spite of the disclaimers of various members of the Government there is little doubt that Allied pressure has been exerted upon the Baltic States generally, and upon the Estonians in particular, to induce them to continue the war against the Bolsheviks. The policy which has been

adopted by the Allies towards Estonia must be understood to apply in a more or less equal degree towards all the Baltic States, not excluding Poland."

It was strongly rumoured at the time that the Allies favoured the formation of a Baltic *bloc* in opposition to Soviet Russia, and probably as a result of promptings from Paris a Baltic Conference was opened on January 13, 1920, at Abo (Finland), attended by delegates from Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Finland, to discuss the formulation of a common policy with regard to Russia. The conference separated on January 22, 1920, " without having arrived at any definite decision " (*The Times*). However, there was no question as to how the delegates were thinking as regards future policy towards Soviet Russia. Four days after the conclusion of the conference the Stockholm Correspondent of *The Times* cabled his journal :

" In the latter phases of the Baltic Conference it was remarked that all the speakers, not excepting the Poles, seemed anxious to make clear that all the measures contemplated were exclusively defensive, as they wished to live at peace with Soviet Russia."

Whilst this Conference was sitting, the Supreme Council at Paris took a decision on January 16, 1920, which implied a change of policy, albeit a half-hearted one, with regard to Soviet Russia. The Council decided " that it would permit the exchange of goods on the basis of reciprocity between the Russian people and the Allied and neutral countries," the trade to be conducted on the Russian side through " the Russian co-operative organisations." Needless to add, this decision was carefully scanned by the Governments of the Baltic Border States and it strengthened their desire to come to terms with Soviet Russia.

After the conclusion of the Abo Conference, events moved with rapidity. The Russo-Estonian peace treaty was signed on February 2, 1920, and the other Baltic Border States

took preliminary steps in the direction of the establishment of peace with Moscow.

The Allies had by now, more or less, made up their minds that it would be futile (to use no stronger term) to encourage the Border States to continue in a state of war with Russia, and on February 24, 1920, the Supreme Council sitting in London at the time, declared :

" If the communities which border on the frontiers of Soviet Russia and whose independence or *de facto* autonomy they have recognised were to approach them and to ask for advice as to what attitude they should take with regard to Soviet Russia the Allied Governments would reply that they cannot accept the responsibility of advising them to continue a war which may be injurious to their own interest.

" Still less would they advise them to adopt a policy of aggression towards Russia. If, however, Soviet Russia attacks them inside their legitimate frontiers, the Allies will give them every possible support."

The statement, hesitant and indecisive though it was, showed at any rate that the Supreme Council was pursuing, with extreme caution, the logical implications of their decision on January 16, 1920, and in this sense it was interpreted in the Baltic Border States.

Unfortunately, the two declarations of the Supreme Council were to a great extent discounted by the secret intrigues and public utterances of members of both the British and French Governments, and by the continued supply of munitions to Poland (with which we shall deal in another chapter) for the continuation of the war against Russia. Despite these opposing factors, and the Polish-Russian war (April to October 1920), peace was signed with Lithuania on June 30, with Latvia on August 11, and with Finland on October 14, 1920.

CHAPTER XIV

IN SIBERIA AFTER THE ARMISTICE: KOLTCHAK'S ADVANCE, RETREAT AND ELIMINATION

WE MUST PREFACE this chapter by explaining that the form of fighting which took place in Siberia and Eastern Europe between the Soviet Forces on the one hand, and the "White" Army and its Allies on the other, was altogether different from the trench warfare which took place on the fields of Flanders.

It was open warfare, there were big gaps in the lines of the opposing sides, gaps so wide that often whole detachments passed through them. In some cases they were able to attack the opposing side from the rear, and capture very considerable quantities of stores before the latter could be removed, or destroyed; in other cases the attacking detachments were surrounded and captured.

When the armistice terms between the Allied and Central Powers were being signed (November 1918) in Western Europe, the relative positions of the Red and "White" Armies facing one another in Eastern Europe were roughly as follows: all the Volga towns, together with the important town of Perm, were in the hands of the Red Army, whilst Ufa and Orenburg, on the western foot-hills of the Urals, and Ekaterinburg (now Sverdlovsk), in the Urals, together with the railways stretching from these towns to Vladivostok, were in the occupation of the "White" Army and its Allies, the Czech, British, French, Japanese, etc., etc., troops.

To appreciate accurately subsequent developments, it is

necessary to recall the unquestionable fact that the majority of the inhabitants of Siberia were pro-Soviet and anti-Koltchak, and that only the presence of foreign troops, particularly the Czecho-Slovak forces, rendered "White" sway possible. *The Times* Special Correspondent at Omsk on March 1, 1919, sent a lengthy review of developments in Siberia from November 1917 to March 1919, in the course of which he stated: "Siberia remained undisputedly Bolshevist until the advent of the Czecho-Slovaks."

Preparations in the "White" camps for an advance into European Russia went on as rapidly as the conditions of the country would permit. *The Times* Correspondent cabled his paper from Omsk on December 12, 1918:

> "Three weeks ago Admiral Koltchak gave me authority to telegraph to Europe that if he were allowed a month in which to mature his plans, he would be able to hold the Ural front independently of the Czechs, and that the new army would be able to take the offensive. Since then wonders have been worked, and although there have been ups and downs on the front, it is a fact that the new army during the past 10 days has won a series of minor victories against the Bolshevists entirely unaided by the Czechs."

The Czechs' attitude towards Koltchak was one of deep suspicion but official efforts were made to allay it. *The Times* Correspondent, in the course of the cable of December 12 further stated:

> "The Czech attitude is still causing anxiety, but the fact that M. Stefanik has arrived in the Urals with definite orders from the Czech Government to keep the Czech Army out of politics, gives some assurance that serious danger to Admiral Koltchak's Government need not be expected from this quarter."

However, despite the heavy odds in military equipment in favour of Koltchak and his Allies as compared with the

resentful inabitants, serious revolts occurred in the various towns along the Trans-Siberian railway, not excluding Koltchak's capital itself, Omsk. *The Times* Correspondent in that city sent the following illuminating cable to his paper on December 22, 1918 :

" Omsk is now alive with troops, one part of the town being shut off by a cordon, and every passer-by is subjected to strict examination. Many of the escaped prisoners, who include a batch of political offenders from Ufa, have already been recaptured, and the remainder are being diligently searched out. Some have been cut down in the streets, and what with the intermittent firing in the small hours and a few bloody evidences of the night's work Omsk to-day is a place of considerable excitement.

" It is satisfactory to record that all necessary military measures were promptly taken, though it is somewhat disquieting to realise that some troops have been affected and that the gaols were so carelessly guarded that a few officials with Socialist leanings should have been able to give liberty to the inmates. It is understood that the Government will court-martial all concerned forthwith, and make an example of them as a warning against similar conspiracies in future."

Yet, these notorious facts notwithstanding, the statesmen of the Allied Governments, when urged to negotiate with the Soviet Government, repeatedly asserted that " Siberia had broken away from Soviet Russia " and that therefore there was " no Russia " with which they could deal.

On December 24, 1918, Koltchak's forces captured Perm from the Red Army, but this was more than offset by the victories of the Red Army : on December 31, 1918, the Soviet forces captured Ufa, on January 22, 1919, Orenburg, and on January 24, 1919, Uralsk. It is true that the capture of Perm was a gain of great potential importance to the " Whites," one of their paramount aims being a junction of

the Siberian and Archangel forces at Kotlas. They hoped to push along the railway from Perm to Viatka and thence to Kotlas which stands on the Dvina. The " Whites " at Archangel were hoping to advance along the Dvina to Kotlas and join forces with the Siberians in that town. At the same time the Siberian forces were hoping to effect a junction with Denikin's troops coming up from the south, but the capture of Orenburg by the Soviet forces rendered this impossible. So far the balance of honours was decidedly in favour of the Red Army.

It should, however, be noted that the " Whites " and their Allies were in possession of the railway lines from the Urals to the Pacific : " Those controlling the Siberian Railway control Siberia itself, for beyond the railway is only a wilderness," cabled *The Times* Correspondent from Tokio to his paper on January 11, 1919, in a review of the situation then existing in Siberia.

East of the Urals the Allies were continuing to assist the " Whites " not only in equipping but also in training their troops.

W at part did Britain, or, to be more precise, those who acted in her name, play ? Here we shall deal only wit a single case. On February 15, 1919, *The Times* Correspondent at Vladivostok cabled to London :

" This is a memorable day for the Russian National Army, as the first batc of 500 officers and the same number of N.C.O.'s will leave the school on Russian Island after completing their course of instruction. My impression of the school---confirmed by all Allied Russian visitors—is that it is the best piece of work done for the future revival of the country.

" Russian Island, a few miles across the bay, is a large secluded tract, on which barracks were built during the war for a whole division of infantry.

" The idea of founding a school for the new Army was initiated and carried out by the joint efforts of British and

Russians, the material assistance coming almost entirely from the British. The instructional staff is naturally Russian, under the able command of General Constantine Sakharov, but has derived invaluable aid from a small select body of British instructors and a platoon of Hampshires. By the demonstration of British methods, officers and N.C.O.'s have been enabled to embody in the new Russian Army whatever was found by their own instructors to be an improvement on Russian methods."

Although at this period attempts were made in Western Europe to dissemble the real aims of the military and civil groups who revolved around Koltchak, *The Times* Correspondent at Omsk had no illusions on the subject. On February 3, 1919, he cabled his paper :

" In military circles, particularly, but also in commercial circles there is a growing demand for an arrangement whereby the Japanese should provide the necessary military assistance to crush the Bolshevists and restore the Monarchy, and in exchange be accorded control of the Siberian railway up to the Urals, and special privileges in Siberia and Northern Manchuria. . . . Russians recognise the serious sacrifice that would be involved in any such arrangement, but point out that a man threatened with gangrene will readily lose a limb to save his body."

No equivocation here—to " restore the Monarchy " !

That cable was sent at a time when Koltchak was not only dependent on the Allies for military equipment and general supplies but at a time when the " Whites " were quite unable by their own efforts to work the railways. The following two cables from the same Correspondent at Omsk are illuminating :

" Omsk, *February 15, 1919.*

" The Vice-Minister of Communications describes the condition of the railway now as being catastrophic, an

enormous proportion of the engines being out of commission, partly owing to the exceptionally cold weather, which has frozen the pipes. Near Tcheliabinsk, in the Ural region, there are 250 derelict engines, mostly put out of action by frost. There is a fuel and lubricating oil famine, and the Altai Railway to Semipalatinsk, and the Kulundinski–Havgarod line, totalling 1,000 miles, are closed down for lack of fuel.

" If the assumption of control by the Inter-Allied Commission is not speedily made effective there will be cruel happenings here."

" Omsk, *March 1, 1919.*

" The condition of the railway is now beyond words, and it is not too much to say that it is within measurable distance of ceasing to work altogether."

During this time changes were taking place in military dispositions. The Ural front was now being defended by the " White " Army. On February 21, 1919, *The Times* Correspondent at Omsk cabled :

" The Czechs have now wholly retired, and the front is exclusively manned by Russians, who are holding their own pending offensive movements when the weather breaks."

The Correspondent did not mention the notorious fact that the Czechs were by this time thoroughly disillusioned as to the aims of Koltchak's " Government " and could no longer be relied upon to participate in the actual fighting against the Soviet Power.

However, the readers of *The Times* were not left in doubt long as to whether Koltchak was still in need of Allied military assistance if he were to invade European Russia. A Special Correspondent of that paper after a visit to Omsk cabled from Kharbin on March 10, 1919 :

" Admiral Koltchak cannot do without the support of

the Allies on the lines of communications. He owes much to the presence of Allied troops in the cities of Siberia. The men of the Hampshire and Middlesex battalions gaily promenade the streets of Omsk in the fiercest frost without overcoats. This does much to strengthen the confidence so essential to the success of the new Government."

During February the preparations of the "Whites" proceeded as rapidly as circumstances permitted. Koltchak made a tour of the front and returned to Omsk, outwardly, at least, full of hope. On March 1, 1919, *The Times* representative at Omsk cabled London:

"Admiral Koltchak has returned from his tour of the front in high spirits and reports a general improvement in the situation."

But what was the nature of the human material commanded by the Admiral? The character and calibre of the officers who commanded the "White" Siberian Army were described by an experienced observer. The *Manchester Guardian*, July 1920, published articles from a Correspondent who had been there throughout the whole of the campaign. This Correspondent was subsequently captured by the Bolsheviks and he returned to Great Britain in the early summer of 1920. Respecting the "White" officers, this Correspondent wrote:

"The majority of the officers had a rooted objection both to fighting and to working. They remained as far from the front as they could. They 'wangled' staff jobs for themselves in Vladivostok and Omsk, frequented restaurants in those towns, and the only martial ardour which they showed was exhibited in those restaurants when, late in the evening, they sometimes covered the members of the orchestra with their revolvers and made them play 'God Save the Tsar.'"

Regarding the rank and file of the Army, he said:

"The men did not want to fight, did not know why they were called upon to fight, and were very doubtful of the uses to which their victory, if they were finally victorious, would be put."

And with respect to the behaviour of the officers towards their men, he stated:

"Many officers swindled the men of their food and clothes in the good old way, and were habitually cruel to them." (These three extracts are from the *Manchester Guardian* of July 6, 1920. We shall have occasion in the course of this chapter to quote often from that Correspondent's excellent objective records.)

Immediately after the return of Koltchak to Omsk, his armies began a general advance on a 700 mile front. Their immediate objects were the taking of Viatka, and also Samara and Kazan on the Volga. A glance at a map will show the strategic importance of these three towns. From Viatka the "Whites" hoped to advance along the railway to Kotlas, and there join forces with confederates coming up the Dvina from Archangel.

The occupation of Samara and Kazan would have given them control of the Volga and consequently would have cut off Moscow from the grain areas of the Volga valley. It was also hoped that Denikin, pushing up from the south, would join forces with Koltchak in the Volga towns. When these junctions had been effected it was intended to make a general advance south-west, west, and north-west towards Moscow. Simultaneously with this grand advance, it was hoped that the Allied Governments would succeed in driving the Governments of the Baltic States and Poland to march their armies eastward towards Petrograd and Moscow.

Koltchak at first met with considerable success. On March 14, 1919, Ufa was captured and the Siberian Army, as it came to be called, continued to advance on its extensive front. The Koltchak Government subsequently reported

from Omsk that, on April 18, 1919, its army (*a*) was within 35 miles of Samara, (*b*) within 26 miles of Buzuluk, (*c*) had occupied Glazov, midway between Perm and Viatka, (*d*) was successfully progressing towards Kazan.

What part did British supplies play in making this possible? *The Times* Correspondent at Omsk, in the course of a cable to his paper on March 14, 1919, commenting on the occupation of Ufa stated :

> " Thanks largely to the stiffening effect of the British battalions at Omsk, Admiral Koltchak has been able to retain the position from which intriguers sought to oust him and to mature his plans, and, thanks to the British supplies which have been pouring into Siberia during the last three months, his armies have ammunition, rifles and clothing, without which he could hardly have succeeded."

After Glazov had been taken, *The Times* Correspondent at Ekaterinburg cabled his paper on April 21, 1919 :

> " The troops on our right have taken Glazov (midway between Perm and Viatka) under almost incredible difficulties. The snow was so deep and soft that men and even horses disappeared. General Gaida, the General Officer Commanding the Siberian Army, who has just returned from there, tells me that he lost two mounts.
>
> " The Czech medical student Gaida, who a year ago commanded a company, is now a lieutenant-general in the Russian service, the hero of almost fabulous exploits. He was invested by General Knox[1] with the Order of the Bath in the presence of thousands of young troops."

We must answer a question here which will occur to every thoughtful reader, viz., how many foreign troops were assisting Koltchak at the time of this advance? That question was answered in the Chamber of Deputies in France on

[1] Major-General Knox was Chief of the British Military Mission to Koltchak's Government.

March 26, 1919, by M. Pichon, Minister for Foreign Affairs. He said the effectives were as follows :

> " Czecho-Slovaks, 55,000
> Poles, 12,000
> Serbians, 4,000
> Rumanians, 4,000
> Italians, 2,000
> British, 1,600
> French, 760
> Japanese, 28,000
> Americans, 7,500
> Canadians, 4,000
>
> Making a total of 118,000 men, and, adding Russian forces, 210,000 men " (*The Times*, May 27, 1919).

Later, the number of Japanese troops was increased to 75,000.

The Siberian Army continued to advance and on April 24, 1919, *The Times* Correspondent who had removed from Omsk to Ekaterinburg cabled his paper from the latter city that the Siberian Army's " outposts have reached the outskirts of Chistopol, 70 miles south-east of Kazan " ; and that the " Uralsk Cossacks have gone 35 miles west of Uralsk thus . . . straightening out our line to the Caspian." In the course of the same cable the Correspondent also stated that " the situation here was never brighter." On the following day, April 25, 1919, Orenburg was evacuated by the Red Army.

The Correspondent apparently had forgotten his own earlier cables regarding the conditions in Koltchak's rear with which we shall deal presently. The " Whites " were, it would appear, so certain of at least holding the ground which they had won that *The Times* Correspondent at Ekaterinburg cabled his journal on April 27, 1919, to the effect that the Siberian Government had decided forthwith to transfer the seat of Government from Omsk to Ekaterinburg. Yet even before that cable had left Siberia the tide had begun to turn.

The conditions in the rear of the " White " Army were an

important factor which both *The Times* Correspondent and Koltchak's Government seemed to have very much underestimated.

On April 8, 1919, *The Times* Correspondent cabled his paper from Omsk :

> " Bolshevist plot discovered with ramifications affecting railways and workshops throughout Siberia."

Four days later the same Correspondent cabled :

> " The Bolshevist organisations were captured at Tomsk and Tiumen, tried by a drumhead Court-martial, and shot. The execution was carried out by young troops publicly."

From Omsk to the Pacific the whole of Siberia was seething with revolt which was kept in check solely by the Allied forces, and the " young troops " who constituted the firing parties in Tomsk and Tiumen did not long remain, if they ever were, loyal to Koltchak.

During April 22 to 25, 1919, the Soviet Armies won an important victory in the Buzuluk-Bururuslad district (lying between Ufa and Orenburg in the east and Samara in the west), but Koltchak's centre and right wing still continued to meet with some success. However, on May 12, 1919, *The Times* published the following message :

> " A Bolshevist wireless message asserts that Admiral Koltchak's advance in East Russia has been stopped and that he has been forced to take up defence positions."

The message proved to be well founded and although for a time there was a seesaw movement on the extended front, still on balance the gain was in favour of the Soviet forces.

It is necessary to deal here with two questions, an understanding of which is essential to an accurate appreciation of the history which was then being made in Eastern Russia and Siberia.

The first question is : " How did the ' Whites ' treat their

prisoners ? " The *Manchester Guardian* Correspondent already quoted stated :

> " It was difficult to know what was done with prisoners thus taken. When questioned on the subject, the White officers always said : ' Oh, we kill all of them that are Communists.' Jews and commissaries stood no chance, of course, but it was somewhat difficult to ascertain which of the others were Communists. The system generally followed was this. From among the prisoners a man who ' looked like a Bolshevik ' was led aside, accused with great violence of being a notorious Communist, but afterwards promised that his life would be spared if he gave the names of all those among his companions whom he knew to belong to the Bolshevik party. This ingenious scheme, which was tried on more than one victim in each party of prisoners, generally resulted in a number of Red soldiers being executed " (*Manchester Guardian*, July 13, 1920).

The second question is : " How did the ' Whites ' behave towards the villagers ? " The above-mentioned Correspondent wrote :

> " Villages suspected of giving information to the enemy were sometimes burned and all the inhabitants killed. In one village the priest, together with his wife and son, were killed. In another village, which the Whites occupied for one night, a number of Reds who had been hiding in a windmill attacked Koltchak's troops during the darkness and cleared them out of the village. Next day the Whites retook the village, burned it to the ground, and killed all the inhabitants, men, women, and children. It seemed to an outsider that they had brought their disaster on themselves by neglect of the most ordinary military precautions."

It is doubtful whether Paris and London in the first half of May 1919 realised that the tide had definitely turned

against Koltchak. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that the "Whites" succeeded in deceiving them for a time; at any rate little appeared in our Press during the next two weeks to show that Koltchak's star was definitely setting. On the contrary, the "Whites" in Paris and London wrote and spoke as if Koltchak's march westward were unchecked.

The Omsk Government made no secret of the debt they owed to the British Government; the Press of this country on May 15, 1919, published the following cable from Admiral Koltchak addressed to the British Secretary of State for War:

> "I wish to convey to your Excellency my profound appreciation of the assistance which is being rendered by Great Britain to Russia in her national efforts, and am sincerely touched by the friendly message delivered to me on behalf of the British War Office. While marching courageously towards Moscow the Siberian troops are animated only by the desire of liberating the country, bringing her back to the place she is justified to occupy, and enabling the people of Russia to express freely their national will."

No one reading that cable or the following report in *The Times* of May 27, 1919, would imagine that Admiral Koltchak had suffered a severe reverse:

> "M. Sazonov met a number of members of Parliament at the House of Commons last night. Sir Samuel Hoare presided. . . . M. Sazonov took a favourable view of the prospects of the early overthrow of the Bolshevist *régime*, and said that the recognition of Admiral Koltchak's Government would do much to hasten this event. He expressed the deep gratitude of Russians not only for the material support which had been afforded to them by Great Britain, but for the services of the British Navy in saving a large number of refugees."

The "Whites," for reasons which we shall explain in subsequent pages, were interested in giving the impression

that their armed forces were meeting with success. However, the facts were too strong for them and on the day after the above report appeared in *The Times* the Secretary of State for War, Winston Churchill, had to lay the facts before the House of Commons as a result of repeated questioning from the opposition benches. In the course of a comprehensive review of developments in Russia, he stated:

> "Lastly, a new factor has come upon the scene in the advance of Admiral Koltchak's Northern Army. This advance began in March. Since then, on a front of 700 miles, his lines have gone forward to a maximum distance of 250 miles.
>
> "The experience of this war has taught us all how very dangerous it is to speculate about the future, and I deprecate altogether exaggerated hopes being formed. Just as things have turned out so much better than we had any right to expect four months ago, so they may now turn out three months hence very much worse than it seems reasonable to hope now. Within the last three weeks a considerable setback has occurred on the southern sector of Admiral Koltchak's front" (*The Times*, May 30, 1920).

No doubt the report of Mr. Churchill's speech reached Omsk, at any rate *The Times* Correspondent in that city cabled his paper on June 4, 1919:

> "During the past three weeks the national armies have passed through a serious crisis, about which it is now possible to speak quite frankly, although the consequences of recent events are likely to be felt for a long time.
>
> "When the gallant Western Army had driven the Reds to within a hundred miles of the Volga it found itself, owing to losses and lack of trained reserves, unable to withstand the enemy's counter-offensive. Some companies composed of ex-prisoners, tempted by the Reds with fair promises, went back to the enemy, opening a front already sparsely held, and the whole army had to commence a retreat over the ground so dearly won. They are at

present approaching the line of the River Bielaya, on which stands the important railway centre of Ufa. [The latest Bolshevist report states that the Reds are bridging the Bielaya and are close to Ufa.] The casualties among officers have been particularly heavy" (*The Times*, June 10, 1919).

We must for the moment turn our eyes to the Peace Conference in Paris at which events were happening closely connected with the relations between the Allied Governments and Admiral Koltchak's régime.

By May of 1919, a strong agitation was being conducted in Western Europe by the Socialist and Radical Parties against assistance being given to the "Whites," on the grounds that their aim was to restore Tsardom, and the Allied statesmen were compelled to take serious notice of this agitation; at the same time they were being urged by their own Reactionaries, and by the "Whites" in Paris and London—now reinforced by some members of the Romanov family—to recognise the Koltchak régime as the Government of Russia.

In the hope, apparently, of satisfying both sides, the Peace Conference sent a declaration to Admiral Koltchak that they were prepared to render assistance to him on the following terms:

(*a*) "That as soon as the Government of Admiral Koltchak and his associates reach Moscow they will summon a Constituent Assembly elected by a free, secret, and democratic franchise, as the Supreme Legislature for Russia, to which the Government of Russia must be responsible, or if at that time order is not sufficiently restored, they will summon the Constituent Assembly elected in 1917 to sit until such time as new elections are possible.

(*b*) "That throughout the areas which they at present control they will permit free elections in the normal course for all local and legally constituted assemblies, such as municipalities, zemstvos, etc.

(*c*) "That the independence of Finland and Poland be recognised, and that, in the event of the frontiers and other relations between Russia and these countries not being settled by agreement, they will be referred to the arbitration of the League of Nations.

(*d*) "That if a solution of the relations between Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and the Caspian and Transcaspian territories and Russia is not speedily reached by agreement, the settlement will be made in consultation and co-operation with the League of Nations, and that, until such settlement is made, the Government of Russia agrees to recognise these territories as autonomous, and to confirm the relations which may exist between their *de facto* Governments and the Allied and Associated Governments."

The reactionaries in this country and France were furious that Koltchak should be asked to pledge himself to the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, and they also feared that Koltchak would reveal his real mind to the Allies, which would, of course, strengthen the agitation against the continued rendering of financial and military aid by the latter.

On the following day the *Morning Post* commented editorially:

"What suits Russia better, if we may judge by her history, is a strong but benevolent despotism, and if this despotism were composed of elements native to the soil of Russia and ruled in the interest and according to the spirit of the Russian people, it would have a greater promise of happiness, contentment, security, and continuity than constitutional government upon the most approved Western model" (*Morning Post*, May 27, 1919).

The *Daily Telegraph* of the same date was equally explicit; it commented:

"It is impossible for the Koltchak or any other Russian Government definitely to promise democratic reforms

instantaneously, for it seems very improbable that Russia is at the moment ready for any such régime."

The Times in a leader on the following day, May 28, 1919, told the "Whites" what to do with the Bolshevik Leaders if and when the former reached Moscow :

"The recognition of the Koltchak Government is practically assured. It rests in the Admiral's own hands, and there can be small doubt of his decision.

"The zeal of the Bolshevist chiefs, like that of the Jacobin leaders, may be quickened by the consciousness that for them there is no pardon. Their crimes are inexpiable, and, when they cease to govern, the kindred of their countless victims will demand that they shall cease to live."

The French reactionary organs advised Koltchak to agree to any conditions laid down by the Allies and then to ignore them. The following from the *Action Française* of May 29, 1919, is typical :

"If we had any advice to give Admiral Koltchak . . . it would be that he should say *amen* to all the conditions the Allies might pose, and then act on his own intelligence, as circumstances and necessities dictate. Russia is huge and remote. None will go and ask for the accounts from Koltchak."

The *Morning Post* a few days later again returned to the subject : editorially it stated :

"The Allies have repeatedly stated that they have no intention of interfering in the internal affairs of Russia, and it was on that ground that they refused recognition of the Bolshevist tyranny. But if the demands made by the Allies upon Admiral Koltchak, which include the giving of assurances that a constitutional government will be set up, that the independence of Poland will be recognised, and that the engagements of the Government of 1917 will be kept, among other matters, be not interfering in the domestic concerns of Russia, we do not know what is."

On July 12, 1920, Colonel Wedgwood in the House of Commons asked :

"Whether the Secretary for War in May or June 1919, cabled to General Knox in Siberia instructing him to tell Admiral Koltchak that the Prime Minister, who is all-powerful, is a convinced democrat and particularly devoted to advanced views on the land question, and suggesting consequently that Admiral Koltchak should issue a broad and stirring appeal promising the land to the peasants and a Constituent Assembly, in order to strengthen his hands in urging the Prime Minister and Cabinet to recognise Admiral Koltchak's Government?"

The reply was non-committal.

In any case, Koltchak certainly acted on "his own intelligence" and wherever he obtained sway he proceeded immediately to hand back to the landlords the land which the Soviet had decreed to the peasants.

Mr. Ramsay MacDonald was quite convinced that the British Foreign Office had no illusions as to the real character of Koltchak. Speaking at a public meeting, he declared :

"There was evidence at the Foreign Office that Admiral Koltchak was hand-in-glove with the Monarchists of Russia, and that already he had his chosen candidates for the throne, and had issued invitations to Russian officers to go and be received by those candidates :"

Admiral Koltchak, acting no doubt on the advice of the French reactionary Press, said "amen" but with reservations to the Allied Governments' terms. On June 4, 1919, he replied thus to the declaration of the Peace Conference:

"On November 18, 1918, I assumed power, and I shall not retain that power one day longer than is required by the interest of the country. My first thought at the moment when the Bolsheviks are definitely crushed will be to fix the date for the elections of the Constituent Assembly. A Commission is now at work on direct preparations for them on the basis of universal suffrage. Considering myself

as responsible before that Constituent Assembly I shall hand over to it all my powers in order that it may freely determine the system of government. I have, moreover, taken the oath to do this before the Supreme Russian Tribunal, the guardian of legality. All my efforts are aimed at concluding the civil war as soon as possible by crushing Bolshevism in order to put the Russian people effectively in a position to express its free will. Any prolongation of this struggle would only postpone that moment. The Government, however, does not consider itself authorised to substitute for the inalienable right of free and legal elections the mere re-establishment of the Assembly of 1917, which was elected under a régime of Bolshevik violence, and the majority of whose members are now in the Sovietist ranks. It is to the legally elected Constituent Assembly alone, which my Government will do its utmost to convoke promptly, that there will belong the sovereign rights of deciding the problems of the Russian State, both in the internal and external affairs of the country.

" Considering the creation of a unified Polish State to be one of the chief of the just consequences of the world war, the Government thinks itself justified in confirming the independence of Poland proclaimed by the Provisional Russian Government of 1917, all the pledges and decrees of which we have accepted. The final solution of the question of delimiting the frontiers between Russia and Poland must, however, in conformity with the principles set forth above, be postponed till the meeting of the Constituent Assembly. We are disposed at once to recognise the *de facto* Government of Finland, but the final solution of the Finnish question must belong to the Constituent Assembly.

" We are fully disposed at once to prepare for the solution of the questions concerning the fate of the national groups in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and of the Caucasian and Transcaspian countries, and we have every reason to believe that a prompt settlement will be made, seeing that the Government is assuring, as from the present time, the autonomy of the various nationalities. It goes without saying that the limits and conditions of these autonomous institutions will be settled separately as regards each of the nationalities concerned. And even in case difficulties should arise in regard to the solution of these various questions, the Government is ready to have recourse to the collaboration and good offices of the League of Nations, with a view to arriving at a satisfactory settlement."

It will be noticed that Koltchak most emphatically declined to agree to the reconvocation of the Constituent Assembly of 1917, on the grounds that it " was elected under a régime of Bolshevik violence " and that the " majority " of its members were then " in the Sovietist ranks," yet up to this date the major crime committed by the Bolsheviks *à la* the reactionary Press of Europe, inside and outside Russia, was just the dissolution of that Assembly which, by the way, had been elected before the Bolsheviks came into power.

Koltchak, however, was prepared to agree to the summoning of a " legally elected Constituent Assembly " just as his spiritual father, the late Nicholas II, had agreed in 1905. The Assembly (Duma) convened by the latter was duly elected, it was convoked but it was disbanded six weeks later and many of its members who did not succeed in making good their escape were either thrown into prison or exiled to Siberia.

Koltchak's views were heartily endorsed by the " White " *émigrés* in interviews with the Press at this time. Whilst these notes were passing between the Peace Conference and Admiral Koltchak, an episode occurred in London which threw a flood of light on his real aims. A number of his officers were being trained—at the expense of the British taxpayer—and one day they received a letter which read :

" General-Lieutenant Ermolov asks you urgently to communicate with him if you wish to be introduced to

H.M. the Empress Marie Féodorovna. The introduction will take place on a date and at an hour which will be fixed by Prince Dolgoruki, who is in attendance on her Majesty."

The matter was raised in the House of Commons by Colonel Wedgwood; the Treasury Bench admitted the authenticity of the letter, but tried to make light of its significance. Editorially *Common Sense* commented:

"The form is precisely that of the old Czarist régime. Mr. Bonar Law, in reply to Mr. Wedgwood, said he thought Colonel Wedgwood's inference that this procedure shows Monarchist sympathies rather far fetched! It seems to us pretty obvious that it is a case of the Soviet Republic versus Czardom, and that England (under Churchill) is the chief financial and military support of the Czardom."

The Peace Conference replied to Koltchak a few days later that his Note was "in substantial agreement with the propositions which they had made" and that therefore they were "willing to extend to Admiral Koltchak and his associates the support set forth in their original letter"; this, of course, meant that the road was now clear for recognition. Many members of the U.S.A. delegation in Paris were, however, vehemently opposed to the recognition of the Koltchak régime as the Government of Russia, and immediately following on the last Note of the Peace Conference to Omsk an important member of President Wilson's *entourage* resigned. In an interview with the Press he gave his reasons:

"Russia can never be restored and reconstructed on a democratic basis by supporting a military dictator in Siberia. Moreover, I cannot be a party to the policy towards the Baltic States accepted by the Powers of supporting them as long as they were useful to fight the Bolsheviks, but as soon as the Bolsheviks were crushed to hand them back to Russia with our good wishes."

The name of the delegate was Dr. S. E. Morrison, a lecturer on history at Harvard University and an expert in Russian questions, who during the course of the Peace Conference had had full opportunities of studying all the reports at the disposal of the Allied Governments regarding Koltchak.

As just mentioned, the road to the recognition of Koltchak was open but it was never formally taken, because by the date of the Allies' last Note to him he was being steadily pushed back to the Urals.

In the meantime the Red Army continued to make steady progress against Koltchak's centre and on June 9, 1919, it triumphantly entered Ufa. Up to this date the Siberian Army claimed that its right wing was still meeting with success, but the turn of the tide came quickly in this area also, and on June 16, 1919, the Soviet forces entered Glazov. Three days later they occupied Kez (fifty-one miles east of Glazov) and on June 25, 1919, they were reported to be within twenty miles of Perm. The brilliant series of victories of the Soviet forces could no longer be ignored and on June 27, 1919, the *Morning Post* informed its readers:

"The Siberian Army has been compelled to retreat to keep pace with the retirement of the Western Army which has not yet recovered from its defeat. The situation on this front is becoming increasingly serious, and it is not hoped that the Bolshevist advance will be held up until the Western Army have reached the position on the crest of the Urals, which they held before their advance in the early spring."

As the Red Army pressed onwards to Perm the British Flotilla with Koltchak did their utmost to assist the Siberian Army. *The Times* Correspondent cabled from Perm on June 27, 1919:

"I went to pay a visit to the British flotilla. Of the two gunboats flying the White Ensign the *Suffolk* is still down

the river valiantly contesting the advance of the Reds, while the *Kent* is moored a couple of miles up stream off the Motoviliha arsenal, and is disarming.

" Three divisions of the flotilla of which the British gunboats formed a part had been in action almost continuously the whole month.

" One of the most mournful consequences of our withdrawal from Perm will be the loss of the flotilla. There is no way of retreat up the Kama, which is becoming more shallow. The flotilla is gradually dismantling, but it will fight to the end, and then the ships will be blown up. Already last night while the booming of the guns down the river was distinctly audible Admiral Smirnov was hastening with all available craft to reinforce the gallant *Suffolk* and her Russian consorts. Sufficient time will thus be gained to evacuate Perm as Ufa was evacuated."

However, despite everything the Red Forces pressed ever eastward and on July 1, 1919, they occupied Perm and the smaller but not unimportant town of Kungur, south-east of Perm.

At this time the clothing of the Red Army very much resembled that of George Washington's forces when he marched his men into Valley Forge. On the other hand, some units of the Siberian Army were much better clad, and clad in British uniforms. The " Whites " had calculated that the sight of a section of the Siberian Army clothed like British troopers would have a demoralising effect on the rank and file of the Red Army, but the actual effect was somewhat different. *The Times* Correspondent cabled from Ekaterinburg on July 3, 1919 :

" The men on neither side are at present disposed to show quarter because each suffers from a terrible lack of clothing. When prisoners are taken they are left practically naked. Thus a war involving the highest principles is reduced to individual combat for the possession of poor rags. Paradoxical as it may seem, the fine British uniforms served out to a few White units have stimulated the Reds to fight in order to capture the wearers."

By the end of the first week of July 1919, it was evident to Koltchak and his friends that all hope of joining up with the Archangel Forces or of reaching Moscow in that year would have to be abandoned. On July 11, 1919, when the " Whites " were preparing to leave Ekaterinburg, *The Times* Correspondent in that city cabled his paper :

" It means a fresh start on an entirely new system and another year of fighting before we reach Moscow, and it means that the Allies must immediately prepare to send all requisites for a winter campaign, principally warm clothing."

Koltchak's front was not only being attacked by the Red Army but his rear, or, to be more precise, his lines of communication, were also being attacked by partisans of the Soviet. *The Times* of July 15, 1919, published the following cable :

" Moscow, *July 13*.—A Bolshevist wireless message states that there are eight Bolshevist partisan bands acting in the Government of Tomsk, in Siberia, all co-operating according to a definite plan. There are five bands in the Yenisei Government and four in the district of Krasnoyarsk. In the district of Irkutsk independent Bolshevist bands are operating in the sectors of Kirensk, Balagansk and Irkutsk.

" There are two Bolshevist regiments operating near the town of Irkutsk, with some cavalry. These make raids, destroying the railway, looting Government institutions, attacking the militia, and confiscating the ' property of the rich.' "

Under such favourable circumstances the Red Army forced Koltchak steadily back ; on July 14, 1919, the Red Flag was hoisted over Ekaterinburg and on the same day

the Soviet High Command reported substantial gains on Koltchak's left wing in the regions of Buzuluk and Uralsk.

The capture of Ekaterinburg was an event of first-class importance not only because the town occupies a central position in respect to the considerable mining industry of the Urals but also because it stands at the entrance to Siberia.

In the retreat of the Siberian Army from Ekaterinburg, British assistance was of considerable value. *The Times* Correspondent cabled from Tiumen—200 miles east of Ekaterinburg—on July 19, 1919 :

> " I resume the narrative interrupted by my departure from Ekaterinburg on July 12. On that and the two following days the railways, under the able supervision of Brigadier-General Jack and his staff of British railway officers, accomplished wonders. Their system, hitherto not applied in Russia, had already rendered incalculable services at Ufa and Perm.
>
> " British and Russian railwaymen are learning to co-operate in these trying times and conditions. The association promises mutual benefit in peace time. It made all the difference at Ekaterinburg."

In this retreat the rich were taking with them as much as possible of their movable property. The cable continued :

> " At one station I had my horse out for a gallop and took a peep at a neighbouring high-road. It was an unforgettable sight, eclipsing even that terrible exodus of Poles, Lithuanians, and White Russians before the German hosts in 1915. For here moved not only poor peasants, but many of the wealthiest inhabitants, farmers and mine and mill owners. One of the latter had a caravan of 60 vehicles conveying his family, servants and goods."

Members of Parliament were now anxiously pressing for official information and were rewarded for their industry on July 20, 1919, by a speech from the Secretary of State for War, Winston Churchill, in the course of which he informed

them that " Admiral Koltchak's Army is continually retreating." On the same day the Soviet Military Authorities issued a *communiqué* stating, " Our troops . . . are advancing along the whole Eastern Front covering up to 16 miles a day. The enemy retires on coming into contact with our troops."

The morale of the Koltchak partisans could not withstand adversity. *The Times* Correspondent cabled from Ishim (about 400 miles east of Ekaterinburg) :

> " The attitude of the public mind is not all that it should be. Admiral Koltchak and General Dietrichs have been inveighing in the strongest terms against the deplorable tendency to scuttle which has characterised the military and civilians, high and low."

However, in the course of the same cable, *The Times* Correspondent prophesied that " we should soon be in a position to hit back."

During the following month, August 1919, the Soviet forces had an almost unbroken series of gains to their credit. The Siberian Army retired rapidly to the east of the Tobol—200 miles east of the Urals—and on August 15, 1919, *The Times* Correspondent cabled from Omsk that " Our Armies are resting and forming behind the Tobol " ; two days later the Soviet forces entered the important town of Kurgan on that river. So far the progress registered was against Koltchak's right wing and centre, but substantial progress was now also being made against his extreme left wing. The Soviet's military report of August 12, 1919, stated that :

> " In the region of Orenburg our troops, having crossed the Ural River, are advancing. To the north-east of Orenburg our troops have advanced six to ten miles, fighting. We have taken prisoners and trophies."

From this date the Soviet forces made rapid progress from Orenburg towards the east, along the Orenburg-Orsk Railway, and towards the south-east along the Orenburg-Tashkent railway.

Meanwhile, other events vitally associated with developments in Russia were proceeding, as the following two cables show :

" Washington, *August 13.*—It is officially stated here that the Government is rushing material help to Admiral Koltchak's retreating forces. Forty-five thousand rifles, several million rounds of ammunition, and a large amount of additional equipment are said to be on the way to Vladivostok " (*The Times*, August 14, 1919).

" Marseilles, *August 16.*—Baron Steinheil and M. Koderousses, Envoys Extraordinary from Admiral Koltchak's Government to the Allied Powers, arrived here to-day from Constantinople on board the *Emperor Nicholas* " (*Morning Post*, August 17, 1919).

The two cables taken in combination demonstrate that, despite Koltchak's reverses, the Allies had by no means given up hope of a turn in the tide.

The Red advance from Orenburg continued to develop successfully along the two railways and on August 30, 1919, the Soviet forces entered Orsk (150 miles east of Orenburg) and Koltchak's troops were rapidly forced back astride the Orenburg-Tashkent Railway.

Whilst these successes were being registered against Koltchak's extreme left wing his forces were also having to retreat both in the centre and on his extreme right wing ; the towns in his rear became rapidly more hostile to him.

By the end of August 1919, the Red Army was well to the east of the river Tobol at many points and with the capture of Tobolsk by the Reds, Koltchak, who presumably by this date was under no illusions as to the seriousness of his position, issued a frantic appeal declaring :

" Our Fatherland is now experiencing a terrible and decisive crisis, and the destinies of the Russian State are at stake. The traitors to their country are striving by all possible means to ruin the work of regeneration. All our efforts must be directed to one end, to repulse the attacks of the enemy, and every man capable of bearing arms should join the ranks of the army, while the rest of the population should devote itself to furnishing supplies and military necessaries."

The Middlesex Regiment sailed from Vladivostok for home on September 8, 1919, but the Hampshires and the British Military and Railway Missions still remained in Siberia, and British supplies of munitions continued to pour into that part of Russia :

" British ships with stores continued to arrive at Vladivostok up till October 1919, and during that year the total amount supplied or carried in British vessels to the Siberian armies amounted to nearly a hundred thousand tons of arms, ammunition, equipment and clothing " (*The World Crisis : The Aftermath*, by Winston Churchill, p. 247).

During September 1919, the Soviet forces on the Koltchak front met with both successes and reverses. On the 11th of that month the whole of Koltchak's Southern Army numbering about 20,000 men with full equipment, artillery, baggage, field hospitals, money and workshops, in the neighbourhood of Aktubinsk-Orsk, surrendered to the Red Army. In that region in a mere week the Soviet forces captured in all 45,000 prisoners. This series of victories was of great value to the Soviet Government as it made possible a junction of their forces with the Tashkent Army group, thus uniting with Soviet Russia an enormous territory rich in raw materials.

In the meantime, General Denikin, as we shall read in a later chapter, was pushing forward in the direction of Moscow and the Soviet Government had to withdraw forces from opposite Koltchak's centre and right wing, with the result that during September the Red Army had evacuated some of the territory which it had won in these regions. A

the same time conditions in Koltchak's rear, from his point of view, became steadily worse and on September 24, 1919, the Soviet wireless informed the world that practically the whole of Siberia from Irkutsk to Blagovestchensk (a distance of over a thousand miles) together with the town of Tomsk (about 450 miles east of Omsk—Koltchak's capital) were in the hands of Soviet partisan bands.

However, as mentioned above, the centre and right wing of the Siberian Army continued to move slowly westward and on September 30, 1919, on the authority of an official Soviet *communiqué*, the Red forces had retired to a line only 14 miles east of Kurgan, had evacuated Tobolsk and were fighting 14 miles from that town. Commenting on the happenings in Siberia in August and September 1919, Churchill wrote :

> "The retirement of the Siberian army continued throughout August. At the beginning of September they still had a numerical superiority over the Bolsheviks, but having retired since May their morale was very bad. Nevertheless, at the beginning of September General Dietrichs struck back at the enemy and recovered nearly a hundred miles" (*The World Crisis: The Aftermath*, p. 245).

(General Dietricbs was Koltchak's commander directing these operations.)

The success of the "Whites" in September 1919 was short-lived. The Siberian Army never reached Kurgan, and on October 15, 1919, *The Times* Correspondent cabled from Siberia that Koltchak was "again on the defensive," and on October 17–18 the Soviet High Command reported important gains 40 miles south-east of Kurgan and in the regions of Tobolsk and Troitsk.

The Red Army advance in Siberia rapidly developed and in addition on October 21, 1919, the Moscow wireless announced that in Turkestan as far south as 106 miles south of Lake Balkhash and also 27 miles north-west of Iletsky-Gorodok the Red Army had inflicted severe defeats on the

"White" forces and that the latter were retreating in disorder. These victories sealed the fate of Koltchak's forces in Turkestan. Moreover, three days later, October 24, 1919, Tobolsk was recaptured by the Soviet forces and on October 30, 1919, Reuters Agency cabled from Omsk to a somewhat unexpecting world :

> "The civil Government is evacuating Omsk. Admiral Koltchak's army is retreating on the whole front."

On the following day, October 31, 1919, the Soviet High Command announced that the Red Army had taken Petropavlovsk (now known as Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsk, 170 miles west of Omsk) and that its offensive in the Tobolsk region was continuing successfully.

The Hampshires sailed from Vladivostok for home on November 1, 1919, but the British Military and Railway Missions still remained in Siberia.

The Times Correspondent in Siberia now made a discovery which must have been staring him in the face, at any rate, since Koltchak lost the Urals on November 3, 1919, he cabled his paper :

> "Our recent reverses have merely served to emphasise the political weakness from which we have been suffering for many months. Lacking prestige and power either as a representative Government or as a dictatorship, the organisation headed by Admiral Koltchak has proved incapable either of assuring victory in the field or of the efficient administration of the country."

By this date there was open and widespread mutiny within the ranks of Koltchak's army : a Moscow wireless message reported :

> "Between November 3 and 10, of Koltchak's troops we captured the 41st, 43rd, and 44th Regiments of the 11th Ural Division, and the 59th Regiment of the 15th Siberian Division, together with the Divisional Staff and the Staff of the 18th Combined Division. The officers and

both Divisional Staffs, who refused to surrender, were shot by their soldiers before the latter surrendered to the Red Army."

These decisive results produced a profound effect on the Government of Great Britain, and the then Prime Minister, Mr. Lloyd George, made his famous Guildhall speech on November 8, 1919, in the course of which he said that Great Britain had "sent one hundred millions' worth of material and of support of every form" to the "Whites" and then he continued :

"We cannot, of course, afford to continue so costly an intervention in an interminable civil war."

The Prime Minister was naturally asked to explain precisely what this statement meant, and in reply in the House of Commons on November 13, 1919, he said that the Government "cannot contemplate" and has made "no provision" for "additional expenditure on Russia."

Meanwhile in Siberia the Red Army was meeting with unbroken success. On November 5, 1919, the Soviet forces entered Ishim, four days later they were within 64 miles of Petropavlovsk, and on November 12, 1919, they captured Kochubaev Station which is within 55 miles of Omsk. The "Whites" in the interim were hurriedly preparing to evacuate their capital. The British Mission, the Ministers of the Government, the British Naval Division and the Japanese left, and the Poles and Czechs brought up the rear.

Before evacuating Omsk, Koltchak's Government decided to add another to its long list of infamies. The *Manchester Guardian* Correspondent thus related it :

"Before the fall of Omsk all the political prisoners (Bolsheviks) in the Omsk prison were shot on the night of the 12th Nov. A similar fate befell the Bolsheviks in the prison at Kainsk before the latter was abandoned."

Readers may quite properly ask, Were not the Reds also

guilty of atrocities? General Graves (Commander of the U.S.A. troops in Siberia in 1919), who appraised happenings in Siberia very accurately, gave his considered opinion as follows :

"There were horrible murders committed, but they were not committed by the Bolsheviks as the world believes. I am well on the side of safety when I say that the anti-Bolsheviks killed one hundred people in Eastern Siberia, to every one killed by the Bolsheviks" (*America's Siberian Adventure*, by General William S. Graves, p. 108).

Koltchak's retreat rapidly degenerated into a rout. On November 14, 1919, *The Times* Correspondent cabled his journal from Taiga (500 miles east of Omsk) as follows :

"Czechs and Poles are guarding the railway and traffic is unimpeded. The Ministers coming from Omsk, caught us up at Povonik yesterday and are going on to Irkutsk. Their plans are uncertain.

"Admiral Koltchak is reported to be at Tatarskoe [100 miles east of Omsk], whither the staff has been transferred. The Reds yesterday were 40 miles from Omsk.

"Bolshevist bands are reported to be threatening the Siberian railway between Taiga and Irkutsk."

On November 15, 1919, the Red Army triumphantly entered Omsk, and in addition captured both troops and stores. Estimates of these vary, but Mr. Emerson of the American Railway Commission informed a representative of the Associated Press that the captures amounted to : 11 generals, 1,000 other officers, 39,000 soldiers, 2,000 machine guns, 30,000 uniforms and overcoats, 4,000,000 rounds of ammunition, 75 locomotives, and 3,000 loaded cars. These figures, even if over-estimated, are eloquent of the state of dissolution to which Koltchak's army had deteriorated by this date. By the middle of November 1919, the "White" forces in Turkestan had also been decisively beaten and regular communications had been re-established between that vast region and Moscow.

For a moment we shall turn our attention again to London. Lloyd George's declaration was hailed by the Labour and Liberal Press but strongly criticised with some notable exceptions by the Tory journals. Mr. Garvin, who had been a fierce protagonist of intervention, now wielded his powerful pen in support of sanity. He wrote :

" The Allied forces have evacuated North Russia. Koltchak's armies have been swept across the Urals, and are now being driven out of Omsk into the centre of Siberia. The Bolshevists keep securely by far the larger part of the vital line of the Volga, and have re-opened their connections with Turkestan. Koltchak's counsels are riven with civil and military dissensions in a way that bodes no good. His heroic phalanx of Czech troops are definitely ordered by the Government of Prague to return to Czecho-Slovakia. The Bolshevist forces have conquered more territory at Koltchak's expense than they have lost even by Denikin's operations.

" These are the facts of the Russian situation, set out as faithfully as we are able to analyse them. The first thing is to be clear about the inunense change in the military and political conditions. After the steps towards peace taken by the Baltic States, further foreign intervention in Russia is not merely useless, but mischievous, and must cease. Mr. Lloyd George's Government will not continue it. No other Government would continue it. No Party in this country will stand for it ; no coherent section of any Party. We doubt whether any single candidate will stand in intelligible terms for foreign intervention in Russia. There is an end of it " (*Observer*, November 16, 1919).

Mr. Garvin's accurate summing up of the situation in Russia and the reactions in Great Britain require no comment, and it may be well to point out that from time to time other influential circles in London had been urging that a friendly Russia was a British necessity. A leader in *The Times* of October 10, 1919, is typical. It reads :

" Unless Russia is friendly and in sympathy with our peaceful ideals of progress and nationality, she can completely upset in the East the settlement that we are trying to bring about. Here, as the history of our relations with Russia in the last century showed, is the part of the world in which we can be most dangerously attacked, for Russia and Turkey command the back approaches to our Indian Empire and have it in their power to destroy our peace in Asia. A friendly and pacific Russia is necessary to the peace of the East."

Few, if any, seriously-minded persons would question the contentions of *The Times*, and yet the policy which it had so strenuously and for so long advocated was undoubtedly calculated to create not a "friendly" but an antagonistic Russia.

The welter in Siberia between Vladivostok in the east and Koltchak's most western outpost, Irkutsk, grew rapidly worse. The following two cables give a fairly clear idea of what was happening :

" Pekin, *November 18, 1919.*

" The Allies' representatives have quelled an extensive revolutionary movement in Vladivostok, in which Guida, the former Czech leader, was implicated. The movement was supported by Social Revolutionaries. Guida is said to have recommended the conclusion of an agreement with the Bolsheviks and the immediate formation of a Siberian Constituent Assembly. A similar movement on a smaller scale was suppressed at Irkutsk " (Reuter).

" Irkutsk, *November 22, 1919.*

" The diplomatic representatives of the Czech-Slovak Army addressed to the local Allied representatives a memorandum bitterly attacking Admiral Koltchak's Government and his agents. The memorandum requests the prompt return of the Czechs to their homes, and expresses their unwillingness to remain in Siberia guarding the railway while keeping meantime a neutrality in Russian affairs " (*The Times*, December 2, 1919).

The risings in Vladivostok, Irkutsk, and elsewhere were quelled largely by the Allied troops, but the opposition on the part of the inhabitants towards the Koltchak régime grew rapidly stronger, and relations between the Czechs and the " White " forces also became continuously more strained.

Koltchak hoped or, at any rate, tried to strengthen his waning hold on the country by recasting his " Government." On reaching Irkutsk all of his Ministers resigned and the Admiral decided to appoint new ones. Commenting on this *The Times* Correspondent, who by this date had retired as far east as Chita, cabled from that town on November 24, 1919 :

> " Our chief danger lies in the ignorance of the masses and the failure of the Omsk Government to attract them. The new government will be conducted on entirely different lines."

From this it would appear that the Omsk Government had failed to attract the masses, yet *The Times* had been denouncing the British Government for not recognising the Omsk (Koltchak) Government as the Government of Russia.

The Times representative apparently even at this late date regarded the proposal to reorganise the Omsk Government as a serious and realistic proposition, because we find him again cabling home on December 5, 1919, from Chita :

> " The process of reorganising the Government in Siberia is making great strides. By the time the new organisation is complete little if anything will remain of the system created a year ago."

As we shall see, before " the new organisation " was completed, the whole structure of Koltchakism in Siberia had completely crumbled. As a matter of fact, three days after that cable was despatched the 2nd Barabuski Regiment mutinied in Novo-Nikolaievsk (now Novo-Sibirsk), declaring that they no longer intended fighting for Koltchak and that they only desired to make their peace with the Soviets.

Meanwhile, the retreat of the " Whites " eastward continued amidst well-nigh indescribable conditions. *The Times* Correspondent cabled from Irkutsk on December 12, 1919 :

> " The tragedy of Omsk did not end with the fall of the city and of the Government. The terrible sufferings of the refugees during the railway journey eastward are indescribable. Whole trains were burned by the half-frozen passengers, who were compelled to trudge, and many succumbed to cold."

By this date the infantry on both sides were travelling on sledges, and one witness described their tactics as a " sort of cross between those of cavalry and infantry."

Aided no doubt by the revolt in Koltchak's ranks the Red forces pressed forward and entered Novo-Nikolaievsk—400 miles east of Omsk—on December 14, 1919, capturing several generals, 500 other officers, 10,000 prisoners, and much booty, including 88 guns, 200 motor-cars and motor-cycles, 2 armoured trains, 20,000 wagons half-loaded with various kinds of military stores. The *Manchester Guardian's* Correspondent, then in Siberia, estimated that Koltchak's forces before the fall of Omsk amounted to 320 echelons, but of these only about 100 remained with Koltchak after he had evacuated Novo-Nikolaievsk.

The Correspondent described the position of the " White " forces in the retreat eastward from Novo-Nikolaievsk thus :

> " East of Novo-Nikolaievsk about 100 remaining Russian echelons, being sandwiched in between Polish and Czech echelons, were in a still worse position than before, as their movement was controlled by Polish and Czech station commandants, who always gave their own echelons preference in moving eastwards. Even Russian Staff trains with orders to proceed without delay direct to Krasnoyarsk were invariably held up at little station sidings, sometimes for three or four days, in order to let through Polish echelons—containing men claiming Polish nationality who had only recently been mobilised from

prison camps. Daily some unpleasant incident occurred between Russians and Poles, and there were even cases when force of arms was resorted to by Russians in order to maintain their rights against the Poles" (*Manchester Guardian*, July 20, 1920).

The Polish troops after the evacuation of Novo-Nikolaievsk had undertaken the duties of rearguards, or perhaps it would be more correct to say that a series of kaleidoscopic events had thrust this duty upon them.

At first the "Whites" hoped to make another stand on the Tomsk--Taiga line and their troops who had been resting in reserve in this area were brought up to their full strength of about 18,000 bayonets, but it was soon discovered that revolutionary propaganda had made considerable headway among them and that they were no longer dependable.

By this time the Red Army was much better clothed and equipped than earlier in the campaign: General Graves, the U.S.A. Command ng Officer in Siberia, wrote:

"One hundred thousand men clothed, armed, and equipped by the British had joined the anti-Koltchak forces by December, 1919, and the Bolsheviks wired General Knox thanking him for supplying clothing and equipment for the Soviet forces. These people now had sufficient force to demand fair treatment by the foreigners in Siberia, and they did not propose to longer submit to the railroads being operated, under the protection of foreign troops, for the sole benefit of their enemies" (*America's Siberian Adventure*, p. 301).

As can well be imagined, nerves had now become very frayed within the camp of Koltchak and his foreign Allies, and disagreements rapidly multiplied. Matters came to a head on December 16, 1919, when the Commander-in-Chief of the Czech forces, General Sirovi, issued an order to his troops to uncouple the engines from all trains conveying Russian echelons eastward, including Staff trains, and to

use the locomotives to hasten the evacuation of Czech trains eastward. Sirovi justified his order on the grounds that the Russians had not fulfilled their repeated promises to provide him with sufficient engines and fuel for the eastward movement of his forces. One of the first applications of Sirovi's orders was against Koltchak himself. Four of his trains were stopped outside Krasnoyarsk on December 17, 1919, by Czech commanders, and the latter, despite all protests, refused to permit the tra ns to move further. Koltchak got into telegraphic communication with the representat ves in Siberia of the Allied Powers and after the passing of many telegrams to and fro, the holding of many conferences and the issuance of several challenges to duels, the trains, after several days' delay, were allowed to proceed eastward.

Things went rapidly from bad to worse with the "Whites" and their now half-hearted allies and Koltchak's rearguard evacuated Tomsk—100 miles east of Novo-Nikolaievsk—on December 20, 1919. Three days later the "Whites" fought their last battle against the Soviet forces and were badly worsted. The *Manchester Guardian* Correspondent on the spot commenting on the aftermath of this engagement said:

"After this battle the shattered remains of Koltchak's army scattered, and all stores, munitions, and practically all the artillery were lost. Orders were now issued by the Commander-in-Chief to break away from the regular Bolshevik forces and make for the east, the place of concentration being Krasnoyarsk.

"By now the Russians had lost all their echelons, with the exception of about 45, which were standing, in most cases, with frozen engines between Bogotol and Sudjenka" (*Manchester Guardian*, July 21, 1920).

(Bogotol and Sudjenka l e some distance to the east of Taigo.)

Before the date of the events just recorded, viz., December 23, 1919, Koltchak, together with his Staff of 120 officers and personal guard of 800 soldiers, had entrained from

Krasnoyarsk and were proceeding slowly towards Nijni Udinsk and Irkutsk.

Soon after Koltchak's departure from Krasnoyarsk fighting again broke out between his followers and the Social Revolutionaries which ended in favour of the latter and on December 26, 1919, a Social Revolutionary government was established in the town. At this time severe fighting was also taking place in Irkutsk between the partisans of the Social Revolutionaries and those of Koltchak. These events and the rapidly increasing hostility of the inhabitants of Siberia towards the Koltchak régime sent *The Times* Correspondent into a frenzy, and on December 25, 1919, he cabled his paper from Pekin :

> " . . . It seems accepted all round that if the elections for the Zemski Sobor are now held in Siberia, the Socialists would command a large majority and assuredly resolve on the cessation of civil war and compromise with the Bolshevists.
>
> " The present position can be maintained only by a foreign military force, the employment of which involves a mandate to Japan to come in and stay the Bolsheviks."

The second paragraph contains an admission of crucial importance : " The present position can be maintained only by a foreign force." At long last *The Times* Correspondent admitted that the Allies by intervening in Siberia were trying to force on the Russian people a government which they did not want and that therefore there was no moral justification whatever for intervention in Siberia.

Fighting continued for three days in Irkutsk and on December 27, 1919, Koltchak's Government was overpowered by the Revolutionists.

This date, December 27, 1919—the date on which Social-Revolutionary governments were established in Krasnoyarsk and Irkutsk—is very important in following subsequent developments, because exactly on this day the train containing Koltchak, together with his Staff and personal guard,

arrived at Nijni Udinsk, 280 miles west of Irkutsk. Koltchak was completely trapped : the first big town immediately to the east, Irkutsk, and the first large town to the west, Krasnoyarsk, were in the hands of the revolutionaries.

Further, the paramount consideration of the foreign troops then in Siberia was to leave the country with whole skins. By this time the rank and file of these forces, and in some cases their officers as well, would have welcomed a victory of the " Reds " over the " Whites." At any rate, they were no longer prepared to risk their lives in supporting Koltchak.

When Koltchak's train reached Nijni Udinsk on December 27, 1919, that town had also joined the Revolution and his carriages were surrounded by Czech troops to protect them against the local populace. The Czech officers were in a quandary, they did not want to give up Koltchak and his staff and personal guard, but by this time they could not rely on their own troops to defend them. Koltchak's personal guard solved the problem as far as they were concerned by joining the revolution. The *Manchester Guardian* Correspondent thus describes what occurred :

> " . . . the men tore off their shoulder-straps, and the majority, headed by the band, marched off from the station to the town, where they joined the Reds. The guard band after this incident donned red rosettes and played every night at the local Revolutionary Club " (*Manchester Guardian*, July 22, 1920).

The Czech commander in Nijni Udinsk submitted the matter to General Janin (a French officer then in supreme command of all the Allied forces in Siberia), who was at that time in Irkutsk, and, finally, after the wires had been kept busy for some days, General Janin agreed to guarantee the safe conduct of Koltchak together with his Staff officers and the few soldiers who still remained with him, in all about 110 persons, to the east. Finally, on January 8, 1920, a second-class carriage in which Koltchak and his followers were accommodated, was coupled to the train containing the

echelon of the first battalion of the 6th Czecho-Slovak regiment and left for Irkutsk. On this same day the Red Army entered Krasnoyarsk and the remainder of Koltchak's forces, consisting of 60,000 men, laid down their arms. In the words of the official Moscow wireless this important event meant " the liquidation of the eastern front."

While these developments were taking place west of Irkutsk the revolutionaries east of that town had not been quiescent. On January 3, 1920, a general strike which included all classes and brought the entire administration to a complete standstill took place in Vladivostok. *The Times* report is worth quoting :

> " The strike is described as being definitely political in character and directed against Admiral Koltchak's administration. Proclamations were being distributed by the strikers strongly denouncing Allied intervention " (*The Times*, January 6, 1920).

It may be asked what was happening between Vladivostok and Irkutsk. Were these towns and regions passing into the hands of the revolutionaries ? If not, why not ? The answer is contained in a Reuter cable of January 8, 1920; it reads : " Along the whole Siberian line between Irkutsk and Vladivostok the railway is being guarded by Japanese and Americans."

However, despite the presence of the Japanese and U.S.A. troops and the immense advantage which their control of the railway line conferred on the " Whites" the Moscow official wireless confidently announced, three days later, viz., on January 11, 1920, that " Revolutions are expected from minute to minute in Vladivostok, Kharbarovsk, Nikolaievsk [now Pugachev], and Blagovestchensk. The authorities are fleeing." Moscow's expectations were fulfilled before the month of January had passed. But the revolutionary flame extended still further. It reached far-off Kamtchatka, where on January 10, 1920, the town of Petropavlovsk peacefully passed over to the side of the revolution, the

garrison *en bloc* joined the revolutionaries and arrested the officers, the heads of districts and other officials.

The inhabitants of Siberia aided by the Red Army, despite the presence of foreign forces, were now the virtual masters of the situation and were at long last free to give expression to their pent-up rage against, and hatred of, all that Koltchak and his minions stood for.

The train to which the carriage conveying the Admiral and his followers had been connected took seven days to cover the 280 miles from Nijni Udinsk to Irkutsk. *En route* it was stopped at several stations at which the local revolutionary authorities and forces demanded the surrender of Koltchak and his officers. The Czech commanders were in a dilemma. They had been instructed to convey Koltchak to Irkutsk but it was now doubtful whether they could resist a series of determined attacks by the local revolutionary forces. They resorted to subterfuges. They guarded the carriage containing Koltchak and his staff as though they were prisoners and intimated that they were being conveyed under arrest to Irkutsk.

As the train slowly wended its way towards Irkutsk the temper of the inhabitants rapidly rose. They were determined not to permit the Allied forces to interfere further in the civil war and decided to make the Koltchak case a test case. Finally when the train reached Irkutsk station on January 15, 1920, it was surrounded by a hundred revolutionary soldiers armed with machine guns. The Czech commander was informed that every facility would be given to him and his men to leave the country quite unmolested providing they ceased forthwith to take sides in the civil war, but that the carriage containing Koltchak and his staff would not be permitted to proceed further, and General Sirovi, the Czech commander, was ordered to surrender the Admiral and his followers.

General Sirovi tried to temporise but the revolutionary authorities were adamant. Sirovi got into communication with the head of the Allied forces in Siberia, General Janin,

then at Verkhne Udinsk, and informed him that if the Czechs continued any longer to associate themselves with Koltchak their evacuation would be endangered, and that if he (General Sirovi) were to order his men to defend the carriage accommodating Koltchak and his officers he could not rely on their executing his orders. After some hours, General Janin agreed to the handing over of Koltchak and his staff to the revolutionaries, and at 10 p.m. on the same day they were surrendered to the "Political Centre" at Irkutsk.

By a curious coincidence, in less than 24 hours after the surrender of Koltchak by the Czechs to the Irkutsk revolutionaries, the Allied Supreme Council sitting in Paris decided to open trade with the Soviet through the Co-operatives.

Commenting on what happened at Irkutsk on January 15, 1920, *The Times* Correspondent cabled on January 24, 1919, from Kharbin :

> "The railway itself is under Czech control, but Bolshevist bands occupy every town and village in the vicinity and the Czechs are helpless in the event of a combined movement to prevent their evacuation.
>
> "The fact is that the Bolshevists have the Czechs in a tight place, and it will probably prove that for this reason they were compelled to throw Admiral Koltchak to the wolves."

For the moment we shall have to leave Admiral Koltchak sitting in prison in Irkutsk and have a look at what happened in Siberia to the east of that town.

The Times Correspondent cabled his paper from Vladivostok on January 30, 1920, that Nikolsk had some days before gone over to the revolution, and continued :

> "Claims to have the support of the great majority of the troops and the Russian population in the Far East are made by the Nikolsk Government, the strength and popularity of the new *régime*, which is declared to be

> National Democratic, is demonstrated by the rapid and almost bloodless seizure of Nikolsk" (*The Times*, February 5, 1920).

It is interesting to note that *The Times* headed this cable "SIBERIA ALL RED." On the following day, January 31, 1919, the same correspondent cabled that Vladivostok was also "UNDER RED RULE." In the course of his message he stated :

> "By 10 o'clock the whole city was in the hands of the insurgents. The staff fortress, which is the same building as that used by the British Military Mission, was occupied without the slightest resistance.
>
> "There are throngs in the main throughfares attracted by the picturesque medley of uniforms and the prospect of excitement in the fine weather. Enthusiasm reached fever heat when the officers and non-commissioned officers of the instruction schools on Russian Island marched into the city. Their British equipment and soldierly appearance did the greatest credit to the institution. They remained true to their oath till they saw the hopelessness and futility of opposition. A battery of British field guns still bearing the Union Jack followed."

It will be recalled that the instruction schools on Russian Island were under the special guidance of the British representatives in Siberia and were regarded as one of Great Britain's special contributions to the anti-Bolshevik cause and yet, at a critical moment, the Russian commissioned and non-commissioned officers trained there went over in a body to the side of the revolution smartly dressed in their British uniforms and carrying with them, among other equipment, "a battery of British field guns still bearing the Union Jack."

Truly, our Government must have had some extraordinary advisers in Siberia during the whole of this period.

Next day, February 1, 1920, *The Times* Correspondent in QR

Vladivostok again cabled home : " The Zemstvo Government has complete and bloodless possession of Vladivostok. . . . Disciplined troops from Russian Island are garrisoning Vladivostok."

Siberia, in fact, was now " All Red " although in some parts the foreign forces prevented the local inhabitants from taking possession of the machinery of government.

Meanwhile, Admiral Koltchak was imprisoned in the town gaol at Irkutsk. The local authorities had been instructed by the Central Government at Moscow to send the Admiral and his personal staff to Moscow for trial by a special court. This would no doubt have been done had the " White " Army as such no longer existed, but a remnant under General Voitsekhovski consisting of about 8,000 combatants was still at large. This force, on February 5, 1920, actually captured the town of Polovina, 80 miles west of Irkutsk, from where Voitsekhovski sent a message to Irkutsk threatening that if the Admiral were not surrendered to him he would attack the town.

Up to this date the main body of the Red Army was still a considerable distance to the west of Polovina. The Irkutsk authorities ignored the threat but decided, as there was apparently a possibility of the town again falling into the hands of the " Whites," to place Koltchak on trial themselves. This was done and an Extraordinary Meeting of the Irkutsk Revolutionary Council at 5 a.m. on February 7, 1920, condemned Admiral Koltchak and his Prime Minister to death.

Three hours later the Admiral and M. Pepelaev were led out of their cells and shot. The *Manchester Guardian* Correspondent, then in Siberia, was convinced that the threat of Voitsekhovski hastened the end of Koltchak. Had it not been for that threat the instructions of the Central Government would probably have been complied with. As a matter of fact, Voitsekhovski never attempted to carry out his threat because he feared that if he approached Irkutsk or any other big town his men would desert to the revolutionaries.

After the destruction of the " White " Armies and the surrender of Koltchak, the Soviet authorities and the Czechs had little trouble in composing their differences. A Reuter's cable from Vladivostok, dated February 15, 1920, informed the world :

> " The conditions of the armistice between the Czecho-Slovaks and the Soviet authorities provide for a neutral zone between the Czech rearguard and the Soviet vanguard. The Soviets are to supply the Czechs with coal.
>
> " The Czechs are to hand over the gold they are guarding at Irkutsk [part of the £65,000,000 in bullion removed by Admiral Koltchak from Omsk]. The Czechs are not to give any assistance to the anti-Bolshevists."

The gold referred to here originally formed part of the Treasury of the Imperial Russian Government. It was removed to Kazan by the Soviets, seized in that town by the Czechs and transported to Omsk, conveyed from there by Koltchak's forces when retreating eastward, and again seized by the Czechs when Koltchak placed himself under their protection at Nijni Udinsk.

The Soviet Power now rapidly extended its control over eastern Siberia and evacuation proceeded rapidly. *The Times* informed its readers that " according to a telegram from a well-informed source at Vladivostok, dated March 2, 1920 . . . the whole of the Amur Province is now in the hands of the Bolsheviks." And as to the remnants of the " White " forces under Generals Voitsekhovski and Semenov, who were still hanging on to a few stations in Transbaikalia, from whence it was comparatively easy to retreat into Manchuria, *The Times* Correspondent cabled his paper from Kharbin on March 4, 1920 :

> " . . . Respecting the morale of these troops all informants agree. Neither Semenov's nor Voitsekhovski's men display the slightest inclination to fight."

The evacuation of the foreign forces now proceeded much

more rapidly. By April 1, 1920, the last of the U.S.A. troops had left Vladivostok for home and within three months after that date the last transport conveying European troops had sailed for the west.

European intervention was at an end, but Japan maintained her forces in Vladivostok, only finally withdrawing them in October 1922.

After the withdrawal of the foreign forces from Transbaikalia, the remnants of the "White" troops under Generals Semenov and Voitsekhovski retreated into Manchuria. Many of the men took to banditry and from time to time made pillaging raids into Soviet territory from Manchuria. They were undoubtedly a nuisance to the Soviet authorities, but, despite considerable aid at various times both from the Chinese and Japanese Governments, they never once succeeded in getting any foothold in the country.

We can well imagine that our readers would like to have some authoritative answer to a question which has often been asked: "Could Koltchak have maintained himself in power for any considerable length of time without outside aid?" That question has been authoritatively answered for us by General William S. Graves, the Commander of the U.S.A. troops in Siberia during the period under review. He stated:

> "... At no time while I was in Siberia was there enough popular support behind Koltchak in Eastern Siberia for him, or the people supporting him, to have lasted one month if all Allied supports had been removed" (*America's Siberian Adventure*, by General Graves, p. 157).

Readers will decide for themselves whether General Graves' conclusion fits all the facts recorded in this chapter. But it is now a matter of undisputed historic fact that since the complete withdrawal of all foreign forces the supremacy of the Soviet Power has been unchallenged throughout the vast regions comprising Siberia.

CHAPTER XV

ATTACK FROM THE SOUTH

JANUARY 1919–MAY 1920

THE MILITARY SITUATION in South Russia in the first week of January 1919 was as follows: the Don Cossacks under General Krasnov were in control of the Don Province and held the towns of Rostov, Taganrog, and Novo-Tcherkask. The "Volunteer Army" under General Denikin was in occupation of the Kuban, the important oil centre of Maikop, the town of Stavropol, the Black Sea littoral of the Kuban Province as far east as Sukhum. His headquarters were at Ekaterinodar (now Krasnodar) and his sea base at Novorossisk on the Black Sea. From Novorossisk, Denikin had despatched two expeditionary forces by sea; one occupied the eastern isthmus which joined the Crimea with the mainland, and the other occupied the town of Mariupol situated on the south-eastern fringe of the Donetz Coal Field.

The Red Army was in occupation of the lower Volga down to Astrakhan and the Caspian littoral down to Petrovsk, from there their line ran west and was in continuous touch with the two "White" Armies, and they (the Red Army) also occupied the towns of Vladikavkas and Piatagorsk. A glance at the map will show that, broadly speaking, the Northern Caucasus was about evenly divided between the two opposing forces.

Some Allied troops had come up from "Mespot" and had taken possession of Baku, others had sailed through the Dardanelles, landed at Batum and joined hands along the railway connecting the two towns; 20,000 British soldiers were included in these forces.

In the Ukraine the position was somewhat confused. His

"Serene Highness" the Hetman Skoropadski had retired to Germany when the Teutonic bayonets which had kept him in power retreated to the Reich. A Directory of Ukrainians with Petlura at its head had taken over the management of affairs and had got together a nondescript army which they equipped with arms taken from the retreating German and Austrian troops. The forces of the Directorate were in occupation of Kiev, Nicolaiev, and Kherson, but Kharkov was in the hands of the Soviet Power, whilst Odessa was occupied by naval and military forces of the Allied Governments.

From the foregoing it will be realised that the territory under the joint sway of Generals Denikin and Krasnov was, compared with the whole of European Russia, relatively small, and, as regards the Ukrainian Directory of Petlura, their hold on the Province was so slight that the general opinion of foreign Press correspondents then in South Russia was that its collapse was only a question of weeks. Reuter's Special Service issued a cable from Odessa on January 19, 1919, from which we take the following excerpts :

> "The Directory is relying chiefly upon Galician regiments. According to all accounts, the loyalty and fighting spirit of the remainder of its forces are very questionable, and a considerable proportion of these are likely to go over to the Bolsheviks, who are ceaselessly carrying on their propaganda. Mutinies are already reported.
>
> "M. Chelnokov, a former Mayor of Moscow, and a member of a Russian delegation which went to England some years ago, predicts the Bolshevik domination of the Ukraine unless there is Allied intervention.
>
> "The Ukrainian War Minister, General Grekoff, has been here to solicit the aid of the Allies.
>
> "The general impression here is that the days of the Directory are numbered."

As for the prospects of the "White" forces operating in South Russia generally, their representatives both on the spot and in Paris not only made no attempt to hide, but frankly admitted the fact that, without the assistance of the Allies, the "Whites" would not be able to overthrow the Soviet régime. Reuter's Special Service cabled from Odessa on January 8, 1919 :

> "It is urged by Russians here, as in the North, without the wholehearted assistance of the Allies, the foundations of ordered government cannot be established in Russia.
>
> "Non-intervention as preached by British extremists would merely place Russia at the mercy of the Bolsheviks, and eventually play into German hands."

On the following day in Paris, Boris Savinkov (formerly War Minister in the Kerensky Cabinet), in an interview with the Special Correspondent of *The Times*, said that in order to save the situation "joint Allied intervention through Southern Russia" by an Allied Army of 300,000 was necessary. This was, of course, in addition to the "White" Armies already in the field and in addition to a plentiful supply of munitions.

As regards Petlura—he was at war with the Soviets but was not a supporter of Denikin, he did not obtain support from the Allies and his shadowy hold on a part of the Ukraine (which was all he ever held) rapidly melted away. The British Press of January 22, 1919, contained the following :

> "A communication was received in London yesterday from the Foreign Department of the Administration of the Crimea which says :
>
> "In the Ukraine, owing to the definite collapse of the power of the Hetman of the Ukraine, and the absence of any other power, the country is being given over to anarchy. Bolshevists are occupying town after town, and soon the entire Black Sea coast may fall into their hands."

It would be possible to quote reams of evidence to the same effect, and to the impartial student there can be no question that had the Allied Governments not intervened

Petlura, Denikin, and Krasnov would have been driven out of Russia in the spring of 1919. However, the Allies, although they looked askance at Savinkov's proposal of an Allied invading army of 300,000 men, did intervene, and supplied the " Whites " lavishly with technical instructors and military supplies of all kinds. Even as early as the first weeks of January 1919 munitions, rifles, tanks, and aircraft poured in through Novorossisk and Odessa for the use of the " Whites."

In the first two weeks of January 1919 the " Whites " composed some of their differences : Krasnov submitted to Denikin as Commander of the Forces in South Russia and the latter accepted the leadership of Admiral Koltchak.

A joint plan of campaign was adumbrated : Koltchak, as explained in a previous chapter, was to join hands in the north with the forces at Archangel, and in the south with the forces of Denikin at Tsaritsyn (now Stalingrad) on the Volga. When these two junctions were effected " the collapse of Bolshevism," the world was informed on January 15, 1919, by the " White " diplomatic representatives in London, " would only be a matter of weeks." As our readers already know, the projected junction of Koltchak's right wing with the troops at Archangel was never accomplished and neither was the junction of Denikin's right wing with Koltchak's left wing at Tsaritsyn. Instead, that town became known as the Red Verdun, and is now named Stalingrad.

The Red Army occupied Kharkov on January 3, 1919, and by the end of the month the whole of the Eastern Ukraine, in luding the great centres of Poltava and Ekaterinoslav (now Dnepropetrovsk), was in the hands of the Soviet Power. On February 5, 1919, the Red Army occupied Kiev, and Petlura, together with his Government, retreated towards the Galician border.

On the other hand, in the first fortnight of February 1919 the forces of Denikin made a big drive towards the Caspian, and by the 12th of that month his cavalry outposts reached the shores of that great inland sea. The Red forces whi h

escaped capture retreated northwards through the steppes towards Astrakhan. The whole of the Northern Caucasus was temporarily in the hands of the " White " forces.

Commenting on this event, a Reuter's Special Service cable dated Odessa, February 13, 1919, stated :

> " General Denikin's forces operating in the Caucasus have occupied Kisliar and reached the Caspian. In twelve days General Denikin has advanced 350 versts (about 215 miles)."

But the cable continued :

> " This victory is all the more welcome as it will enable General Denikin's army to turn its attention to the Don front, where the position for some time past has been verging on the precarious."

From the point of view of the " White " forces the position in the Don Region was certainly very precarious at this date. At the " Assembly of the Nobility of the Great Cossack Circle " on February 14, 1919, it was reported that the Don Army " was slowly falling back southwards towards the railway line connecting the Don Region with Tsaritsyn " closely pressed by the Red Army. Two days later, February 16, 1919, General Denikin attended the assembly of the Great Cossack Circle and promised that as the Volunteer Army had nearly succeeded in clearing the Kuban and the Terek, its forces would be directed to helping the distressed Don Army. At that Assembly of the Circle, General Krasnov, owing to criticism of his policy, tendered his resignation, which was accepted.

The southern lunge of the Red Army was steadily pressed : Reuter's Special Service cabled from Ekaterinodar (now Krasnodar) on February 27, 1919 :

> " The Bolshevists, who hold over half the Tsaritsyn-Rostov-on-Don Railway line, have just made a deep indent in the new Don front to the north-west of Novo-Tcherkask, the Don capital. The last Bolshevist bulletin claims that

'Red' cavalry have occupied a station sixty miles to the south-west of Tsaritsyn, after the capture of another station, where 1,800 prisoners, two heavy and fifteen light guns, and forty-two machine guns were taken."

As already mentioned, 20,000 British troops were in control of the Batum–Baku railway with their headquarters at Tiflis. They had also established a flotilla on the Caspian, and an action which they took on March 1, 1919, gave them complete control of the immense inland sea. This episode is described in a cable to the *Daily Telegraph* on March 1, 1919 :

"Stern action of the British authorities to-day resulted in the surrender of nine ships of the Caspian flotilla, which is now in British hands.

"At a recent meeting the Baku organisation of the Russian Social Democratic Labour party were asked for advice, and the meeting . . . decided that the fleet should not be employed for aggressive action against the Bolsheviks or generally for purposes of restoration. For some time it has been known that the Caspian flotilla was coquetting with the Bolsheviks.

"General Thomson immediately issued an ultimatum to the Caspian flotilla and to a detachment of troops, under General Prjevalsky.

"The ultimatum to the flotilla was delivered by British motor-boats, whose torpedoes looked formidable. The result was that all the ships surrendered, and returned to their berths, where the crews were disarmed and put under arrest."

The assistance which British control of the Baku–Batum railway and the Caspian at this time was rendering to the Denikin forces was thus described in the House of Commons by the then Secretary of State for War on March 2, 1919 :

"We are now holding in some force the railway line from Batum to Baku, with our headquarters at Tiflis, and the Admiralty have a fleet of armed vessels on the Caspian, which gives us the command of that extensive inland sea.

"These troops are, of course, not engaged in fighting with any enemy. They are not in contact with any enemy, but they are a certain source of strength and support to the Army of General Denikin, which is fighting the Bolshevists about 100 miles to the north of them."

Meanwhile the Soviet forces in the Ukraine pressed towards the Black Sea ports and on March 8, 1919, the important port of Kherson (ninety-seven miles east of Odessa as the crow flies) was occupied by the Red Army and the French forces retired by sea to Odessa.

On balance the military position of the "White" forces was rapidly worsening and there was no doubt in the minds of Press correspondents in South Russia at this time that failing Allied assistance Denikin's army would be driven out of Russia. For instance, *The Times* Correspondent cabled his journal from Ekaterinodar on March 12, 1919 :

"It is clear that no headway can be made against the tide of Bolshevism in Southern Russia unless the Allies intervene. The forces opposed to Denikin's small army now number 220,000, and they are increasing. The Volunteer Army unaided is doomed."

Many similar expressions of opinion from many correspondents from Allied countries then in South Russia could be quoted if space permitted.

Five days later, March 17, 1919, the same *Times* Correspondent cabled his paper: "The Cossacks have fallen back, leaving more than half the Don territory in the hands of the enemy."

In the course of the same cable the Correspondent threw an interesting sidelight on the deception which had been employed by General Krasnov to induce the Cossacks to continue the struggle against the Soviet after the Germans had withdrawn from the Don area. The Correspondent stated :

"There is no doubt that General Krasnov rallied the spirits of his troops by telling them that British and French

forces would be fighting on their side in a month, in a week, in a few days.

"The real reason for the Cossacks' retirement is the feeling that they have been left to their fate."

A flood of light on the attitude of the "White" officers towards their men and of the "Whites" generally towards the struggle against the Soviet Government is contained in the despatches of Signor Arnaldo Cipolla to the *Gazzetta del Popolo*, Turin. That writer had been with the Italian Mission in the Caucasus, with General Denikin, with the French Expeditionary Forces in the Ukraine, and had paid a short visit to Moscow. Here we shall have to content ourselves with two short extracts from Signor Arnaldo Cipolla's despatches to the *Gazzetta del Popolo* cabled from Milan by Mr. A. Beaumont to the *Daily Telegraph* on March 18, 1919:

"I have seen the Russian Officers still wearing the uniforms of the old régime. Much is to be learned from this fact alone of their psychology. The success of General Denikin's forces in the Caucasus has almost upset their minds, and made them arrogant towards their men. They presume to treat them again as slaves, which was one of the principal reasons, in fact, of the revolution. They think they have come back all of a sudden to the days when they could box the ears of a soldier, kick him with impunity, and see him turn and salute them and thank them for having punished him. The most absorbing question debated by them at present is not the re-conquest of Russia, but whether they should wear epaulettes or not, as they did in the old régime.

"The vast majority of the better classes and of the old aristocracy will not raise a finger to save their country. It is enough to watch their conduct when one comes across them in Odessa, or in Kiev or Moscow, to be convinced of this fact. The one idea uppermost in their minds is simply to escape from the Bolsheviks, but there is no idea of turning back to fight them; when they have escaped they

appeal to the Allies, to anybody and everybody, to come and fight for them, but they will not make the slightest sacrifice or effort to do so themselves."

The Red Army continued to spread itself all over the Ukraine, and Petlura retreated so rapidly that Pichon, Minister for Foreign Affairs, speaking in the French Chamber on March 26, 1919, in a general review of the situation in Russia said: "As regards General Petlura, we do not know exactly where he is."

As already mentioned, Allied troops had been landed at Odessa consisting of Greek, French and Roumanian contingents. They advanced inland along the railway, presuming apparently that they would be welcomed by the inhabitants. However something very different happened. Not only the Red Army, but the local population, turned on them and drove them back to the port.

The military position in South Russia at the end of March 1919 was broadly as follows: the Allies were in control of the Black Sea, British troops were in control of the Batum–Baku railway, and a British flotilla was in command of the Caspian; General Denikin was in occupation of the Northern Caucasus, the eastern end of the Donetz Basin, and not more than half the Don area; Allied forces were precariously hanging on to Odessa. All the rest of South Russia was in the hands of the Soviet Power, with the exception of the Crimea, which the Red Army was then attacking.

The result of the military operations in the following month, April 1919, was overwhelmingly in favour of the Red Army. General Franchet d'Esperey, the French Commander-in-Chief in the Near East, was compelled to evacuate Odessa, largely owing to a mutiny in the French Navy. A section of the Allied Forces retired to the line of the Dniester and others were withdrawn by sea.

This event produced a world-wide sensation. Mr. Winston Churchill commented:

"The foreign occupation offended the inhabitants:

the Bolsheviks profited by their discontents. Their propaganda, incongruously patriotic and Communist, spread far and wide through the Ukraine.

"The French troops were themselves affected by the Communist propaganda, and practically the whole of the fleet mutinied. Why should they fight now that the war was over? Why should they interfere in Russian affairs? Why should they not go home? Why should they not indeed assist those Russian movements which sought to level all national authority and establish the universal régime of soldiers, sailors and workmen? The well-tempered weapon which had served with scarcely a failure in all the clashes of Armageddon now broke surprisingly in the hands which turned it to a new task. The mutiny in the French fleet was suppressed, and its ringleaders were long in prison; but a shock was sustained in Paris which promptly terminated the whole adventure. On April 6 the French evacuated Odessa, and the Greek divisions, which had been unmoved by these occurrences, were simultaneously withdrawn to their own country" (*The World Crisis: The Aftermath*, pp. 167–8).

Hundreds of thousands of lives would not have been sacrificed, millions of pounds' worth of property would not have been destroyed, and treasure running into millions would not have been uselessly (to use no stronger word) poured out, had the Allied Governments, even at that late date, April 6, 1919, appreciated the fact expressed in the following words by Churchill: "*The foreign occupation offended the inhabitants.*" Churchill, perhaps unwittingly, here condemns the whole mad and criminal policy of foreign intervention.

As already mentioned, the Red Army were advancing, at the end of March 1919, against the Crimea. A colony of the Romanovs had retired to that last strip of Russian territory in the hands of the "Whites." They were among the first to seek safety abroad. Mr. Gaunt (a wireless telegraphist from Burton-on-Trent) described the flight of the

Dowager Empress, two Grand Dukes, three Grand Duchesses, eleven Princes, eight Princesses, and a numerous retinue of nobles and attendants, from Yalta on April 7, 1919, in the following words:

"H.M.S. *Marlborough* lay-to all night off Yalta, on the South Crimea coast. The Bolshevists were known to be on the track of the Royalists, and indeed, were in the neighbourhood of the port. The British man-of-war had a searchlight sweeping the neighbouring mountains and armed parties ready to assist.

"The Dowager Empress and her party, however, won the race, and, with the servants' party, were taken on board. They numbered eighty in all. They were taken to Malta, where they landed on the 23rd, and then sailed for Marseilles."

The Red Army advance into the Crimea progressed rapidly, and on April 18, 1919, *The Times* Correspondent at Ekaterinodar cabled his paper:

"The Crimea is now overrun by the Bolshevists. Units of General Denikin's Volunteer Army are reported to be holding positions somewhere between Djankoy and Kertch on the straits."

The "White" forces, according to General Denikin (*The White Army*, p. 244), were enabled to defend the Kertch peninsula by the Allies, particularly the British, fleets operating from the Black and Azov Seas.

In the Don area the "Whites" were faring no better. The same *Times* Correspondent had already cabled from Ekaterinodar on April 15, 1919:

"The situation in south-east Russia has again taken a turn for the worse. The susceptibility of the Don Cossacks to Bolshevist propaganda has become a recurring factor one has to reckon with.

"The 8th Don corps, attacked by the Bolshevist 10th Army, have again given ground, falling back without

resistance to he right bank of the Lower Don. A Kuban Cossack Regiment was sent to restore the *morale* with the result that after much debate it decided to continue fighting, but not to attempt to recapture the lost territory. Meanwhile all the ground between the River Don and the River Manitch has been lost and Novo-Tcherkask is seriously threatened."

In the Western Ukraine, Petlura's star continued its descent towards the horizon : in the third week of April 1919 his troops retreated into Galicia and behind the Dniester.

However, whilst these events were being enacted, others were also proceeding which were soon to cause the tide of battle to set in the opposite direction : military equipment of the very latest types from Allied countries was being landed at he Black Sea ports still in the hands of the "Whites." *The Times* Correspondent cabled from Ekaterinodar on April 15, 1919 :

> "In Kuban great encouragement has been given to the Volunteer Army by the continued arrival of British war material which is pouring into Novo-Rossisk—tanks, guns, ammunition, rifles, clothing, food, and hospital equipment. This has quite restored confidence in British sympathy with their cause."

In the *Memoirs of General Wrangel* referring to this period, we read : "The help which France and England had promised had begun to materialise. Boats laden with war materials and drugs, things of which the army was in great need, had arrived at Novorossisk" (p. 75).

These two statements are confirmed by General Denikin thus : "With the arrival of General Briggs—the new head of the British Military Mission—the first eleven transports carrying war supplies entered Novorossisk" (*The White Army*, p. 230).

The Allied Governments were able to supply the "Whites" with superior military equipment to that possessed by the Red Army, and it was hoped that this technical

advantage would be the real deciding factor in the struggle.

This technical aid, apart from other factors, now began to tell considerably in favour of the "Whites." It was reported from General Denikin's Headquarters on May 11, 1919, that in the preceding five days his troops had defeated the 10th Red Army, cleared the whole of the southern bank of the Manitch River for a distance of 200 miles, crossed to the northern bank of the Manitch and penetrated to a depth of thirty to forty miles, taking thousands of prisoners, guns and machine guns. The part of the 10th Red Army still intact retired towards the Sal River, but even this was reached and crossed by the "White" Army on May 24, 1919, at Martinovka and Orlovka.

Before this date General Wrangel had been appointed to the command of Denikin's cavalry forces.

On the Upper Don, the Cossacks, who had changed sides, had risen against the Soviet Power, and on May 24, 1919, the Don Cossacks launched an offensive along the Lower Donetz front with the object of joining up with the revolting Cossacks in the Upper Don area north-east of Lugansk. Further, in the Bakhmut and Mariupol areas, Denikin's forces also advanced their lines.

On the other hand, along the Ukrainian-Roumanian frontier, the Allied troops, during May 1919, seemed content to hold the line of the Dniester.

Commenting on the success of the "White" forces in May 1919, *The Times*, in a leader entitled "The Bolshevist Decline," said :

> "General Denikin in South Russia has recovered from his recent checks, hanks to the powerful assistance in arms and other supplies that he is now beginning to receive from this country. We are supplying him with complete eq ipment for 250,000 men."

It is germane to our narrative to record here an episode which occurred in London. On May 19, 1919, Sir Arthur Davidson, Private Secretary to the late Queen Alexandra,

on behalf of Her Majesty, wrote to the Commissioner of the Russian Red Cross Society in London as follows :

" I am desired by Queen Alexandra to say that her Majesty will be happy to become a patron of the Russian Red Cross Society that is being formed in England for relief work among the troops who are employed in restoring order in Russia, and among the suffering civil population there.

" Her Majesty is pleased to associate herself with the society on the understanding, furnished in your letter, that it is entirely non-political in its organisation and objects, and that its labours are confined to the humanitarian Red Cross work among those needing its ministrations in Russia."

We quote from the Press at the time.

On the other hand, it is particularly interesting to recall in this connection that about this date the Swedish Red Cross, through the Swedish Foreign Office, had approached the British Government for permission to transport several hundreds of Russian workers' children (living in particularly poor circumstances) from Petrograd to Sweden, who were to be provided for in Swedish workers' households. After months of delay the following reply was received : " An official blockade against Russia has not been declared, but it is considered impossible, nevertheless, that any transport should be allowed to reach Petrograd. The English Naval forces warn all vessels which they find on the way to Petrograd against attempting to run into Petrograd."

General Denikin made no attempt to hide the fact that his success was contingent on sufficient material aid from Britain. His special envoy then in England, M. Delara, issued the following declaration through Reuter on June 1, 1919 :

" General Denikin's military effort was progressing well, but its ultimate success depended entirely upon the aid in materials and technical instructors furnished by Great Britain. Supplies of all sorts, from small-arm ammunition to fully-equipped Tanks, were now arriving, and already over 100,000 tons of material had actually been disembarked and furnished to the Army. The first consignment to reach Novorossisk included over a thousand mules, which, in the difficult country in which the campaign is being fought, have proved of inestimable value."

Denikin's efforts met with considerable success in June 1919. His troops advanced west, north and north-east. They compelled the Red forces to evacuate the Donetz area, and captured the important town of Ekaterinoslav on June 28, 1919, and also occupied Alexandrovsk (now Zaporozhe), an important railway junction. The capture of the latter deprived the Red forces of their sole railway line of communications with the Crimea.

Meanwhile the " White " Army pressed the Red Army out of the peninsula ; they occupied Simperopol on June 20, 1919, Sebastopol on June 27, and Perekop on the same day. The Red forces retreated through the Perekop isthmus to the crossings of the Lower Dnieper east of Nikolaiev.

Towards the north, the Don Cossacks pushed along in the direction of Voronezh, and in the first week of July 1919 they were within 50 miles of that town.

Also the " White " forces having occupied the important railway junction of Bielgorod on June 22, 1919, two days later entered the city of Kharkov.

In the east, the " White " forces were equally successful and the unportant Volga town of Tsaritsyn was occupied on June 30–July 1, 1919. The " White " front in South Russia in the first week of July 1919 ran roughly from the Perekop isthmus bending west towards Nikolaiev to Ekaterinoslav, through Bielgorod to a point about 50 miles south of Voronezh : from the latter point to Balashov, then through Dubovke (30 miles above Tsaritsyn), through Tsaritsyn, to a point on the Caspian coast 55 miles south-west of Astrakhan.

Meanwhile the position in the Ukraine was very confused. The Allied Forces were still holding the line of the Dniester. The troops of the "Ukrainian Government" under Petlura occupied a number of towns situated between the Galician Frontier and Kiev. In addition a number of armed brigands, notably Makhno and Grigoriev, were ravaging the Lower Dnieper and the Southern Ukraine and their depredations seriously hampered the striking power of the Red Army in these areas and on the Dniester.

There is no question that the help in military supplies from Great Britain was an important factor in Denikin's success during June 1919 : *The Times* in a leader on July 3, 1919, commenting on "General Denikin's victories in the South," declared : "It is gratifying to read in the despatch that we published yesterday from our correspondent in Ekaterinodar how greatly British tanks and British uniforms contributed to General Denikin's victories."

However, material support was not the only assistance which Denikin received from Great Britain at this time : the following cable requires no comment :

> "Ekaterinodar, June 7.—General Holman has arrived here and has, on behalf of King George, presented General Denikin with the Order of the Bath.—Reuter."

Why was this Order conferred on a man whom Lord Oxford subsequently described as an "adventurer"? It is, of course, well known and freely admitted by himself that he frequently had his Bolshevik prisoners killed. Did K.C.B., in this instance, as was suggested in the House of Commons, by Colonel Wedgwood, stand for "Killing Captured Bolsheviks"?

The moral and material help which General Denikin was receiving could scarcely have been more generous had his forces constituted a British Army on foreign soil.

But the successes of the "White" forces were bought at a fearful price : General Wrangel wrote "our casualties" were "enormous" (*Memoirs of General Wrangel*, p. 86). On

the very next page Wrangel made some incisive remarks respecting the conduct of the "White" Army which go some way at least to explain subsequent happenings. He declared :

> "General Mai-Maievsky, who had recently been appointed to the command of the Volunteer Army, was a good officer and knew his job.
>
> "But his conduct at his headquarters in Rostov roused the indignation of every honest man. His orgies brought discredit on the Army and on authority in general. The rear of the Army was always badly organized. The generals had almost absolute power and thought themselves satraps.
>
> "The troops followed their example and considered everything permissible. Violence and abuse reigned supreme."

However, after the capture of Tsaritsyn, Wrangel himself indulged his blood-lust to the full ; in the course of a cable sent from that city on July 6, 1919, by Reuter's Special Service, the world was informed : "The Denikin troops captured and shot thirty Commissaries and have imprisoned forty more."

Soon after the occupation of Tsaritsyn, Denikin unfolded to his subordinates his future plan of campaign, which came to be known as "The March on Moscow." Wrangel writes :

> "After the parade, General Denikin invited General Yusefovitch and myself into his carriage and read us his order in General Romanovsky's presence. My Army was to march on Saratov, and then on to Moscow via Nijni-Novgorod ; the Army of the Don, commanded by General Sidorin, was to go to Moscow via Voronege-Riazan ; while Maievsky's Army was to advance on Moscow direct from Kharkov via Kursk, Orel and Tula" (*Memoirs of General Wrangel*, p. 89).

Wrangel and Yusefovitch were strongly opposed to this plan, but it was carried out by Denikin.

In the course of July 1919 there was a good deal of stubborn fighting on every section of the southern front, advances and retreats on both sides, but the only important change was the capture of Kamyshin, 110 miles north of Tsaritsyn, on July 30, 1919, by Denikin's forces.

In the Western Ukraine, Petlura claimed some successes in the Province of Podolia, but his hold over the few towns which he occupied was very precarious and fleeting.

In view of the sequence of events a few months later, a paragraph which appeared in the official Moscow report of July 10, 1919, but which was published in the London Press without any comment, was of weighty significance. It read : " Our partisan troops are operating in the enemy's rear." This crucial fact goes a long way to explain subsequent developments. It is possible that the British Government of the day knew more about that subject than they cared to make public, because the Secretary of State for War, Winston Churchill, speaking in the House of Commons on July 29, 1919, whilst claiming that Denikin had met with remarkable success, warned his listeners against speculating on " the upshot of such operations."

August 1919 opened badly for the Red forces. On the first of the month Poltava was abandoned and the Red troops retired to the west of the town. In the second week of the month Denikin removed his headquarters to Rostov-on-Don, as he now felt his position in the country more secure. This town was nearer to the front, and had better railway connections with South Russia generally than Ekaterinodar.

Petlura's forces now began to register more definite successes in the directions of Kiev and the Dnieper generally. However, the entire front in South Russia was so thinly held that it moved constantly—it would perhaps be more correct to say jumped—backwards and forwards. This fact was graphically described by *The Times* Correspondent in a despatch dated August 14, 1919, describing conditions which he had seen in the upper reaches of the Don. He cabled :

" The priest's cottage was the best in the village. There General Holman was installed, and there we dined with the divisional commander and his staff. The commander was a brave simple Cossack general roughly dressed in a soldier's tunic, with the signs of his rank traced in pencil on the shoulder-straps. He has driven the Bolshevists 15 miles north at one blow, and had just pushed forward with his staff across the River. Two days previously the house in which we were had been vacated by the Bolshevist staff.

" In the drizzling rain we went out into the night—the commander to the front to supervise operations ; we to a peasant's cottage, where, by the light of the ikon lamp, we lay down to rest. ' Keep your horses near you,' an officer said. ' This is guerrilla warfare, and sometimes the front jumps backward and forward very suddenly.' "

Although up to the middle of August 1919 the successes which the " White " forces had to their credit were not decisive, the British Government, in order to give them further encouragement, bestowed honours on the Denikin Army. *The Times* Correspondent cabled from Kharkov on August 16, 1919 :

" Then, when the war-worn Guards and Cossacks and the batteries marched past in fine old style, saluting their Commanders, and when the Commander of the Division, General Bredov, made a speech on the aims of the Volunteer Army, and General Holman bestowed British decorations on several officers and men, enthusiasm rose into long bursts of cheering. People thronged around General Holman weeping for joy, and kissed his hands and tossed him, although he is as big as Peter the Great, and carried him off to his car."

In the second half of August 1919 the fighting went decisively in favour of the " Whites," although the entire line constantly swayed. On August 19, 1919, Denikin's forces

entered the important Black Sea ports of Kherson and Nikolaiev, and on August 22, the Red Army were forced to evacuate Zhitomir and Berditchev, respectively 80 and 90 miles west of Kiev, but on the same day the "White" Army was driven out of Kamyshin on the Volga. On the following day, August 23, 1919, the Red Army had to evacuate Odessa and retreated northwards in the direction of Balta.

The fall of Odessa meant that the whole of the Black Sea coast was in the hands of the anti-Soviet forces. During the fighting the Allied warships gave considerable help to Denikin by convoying his transports and assisting his landing parties. In connection with the occupation of Odessa *The Times* reported, "A party of volunteers landed on the 23rd and captured the coast batteries south of the town at Cape Fontana. Counter-attacks by the Red troops were driven off by the gun fire from the ships."

Towards the close of the month, Petlura from the west and Denikin from the south, despite a number of setbacks, steadily converged on Kiev, and on September 2, 1919, the Red Army evacuated the city.

Petlura's troops entered the city five hours before Denikin's forces. A dispute at once arose. *The Times* Correspondent tells the result :

> "The question who was to remain in possession was not long disputed. General Bredov, in accordance with Denikin's orders, issued an ultimatum to the Ukrainians giving them the choice between laying down arms and evacuating the city. Two thousand thereupon surrendered and the remainder withdrew to a line about 40 miles to the west of Kiev."

This dispute, in more ways than one, benefited the Soviet forces. The cable continued :

> "The latest information regarding the Ukrainian troops is that they have withdrawn towards Jitomir, leaving a gap between them and Denikin's troops. Through this gap the remainder of the Bolshevist troops who had been driven out of Odessa are working their way northwards. This force is estimated at 10,000 men. The Ukrainians are also reported to have attacked the Volunteer troops north of Odessa."

In the course of this month (September 1919) there were many retreats and advances along the entire front. On September 8 the Red Army was within six miles of Tsaritsyn. Four days later they had withdrawn to new positions twenty miles north of the town. At this time the "Whites" were trying to clear up the position between Odessa and Kiev and to prevent the escape of the Red battalions who were fighting their way north from Odessa.

Meanwhile the relations between Denikin and Petlura did not improve. *The Times* Correspondent cabled from Rostov on September 15, 1919 : "The present relations between the Volunteer Army and the Ukrainians is one of armed neutrality . . . there can be no compromise." The Red Army made a determined attack towards Kharkov which at first met with success, but later it had to give ground again. On September 21, 1919, it had to evacuate Kursk (about 280 miles south of Moscow) and the line between that town and Kiev was cleared of Red Army forces. An official *communiqué* issued in Moscow on September 23, 1919, stated :

> "Our advance on both flanks of the Southern Front, in the regions of Kiev and Tsaritsyn, which is a counter to Denikin's advance on both sides of Kursk, after an interval has been renewed with still greater energy. The Red Army has advanced on Kiev by the shortest road from the side of Jitomir (which is 120 miles west of Kiev).
>
> "In the other direction, our Volga group has restarted an energetic advance on Tsaritsyn. If we succeed in accomplishing our advances in the regions of the Dnieper and Tsaritsyn, General Denikin will be completely defeated along the whole Southern Front."

At this date the general estimate was that Denikin's army numbered between 300,000 and 400,000 men, that it was a much better force than Koltchak's army had ever been, and that Denikin occupied about a fourth of Russia proper.

October 1919 was the decisive month in the campaign. Judged by surface appearances it opened well for the "Whites." In the first week they continued to advance along the railway line from Kursk to Voronezh, and on October 6, 1919, they occupied the latter town. Voronezh is situated 120 miles east of Kursk and its capture brought Denikin's centre on to a fairly straight line.

A week later, October 13, 1919, Orel was occupied by the "White" Army, which was now within 200 miles south of Moscow. This gain, important though it was, was offset two days later when the Red Army, after a rapid advance from the west and south-west, occupied Kiev. However, on the same day, October 15, 1919, Denikin's troops occupied Novosil, forty miles east of Orel, and just under 200 miles south of Moscow.

Novosil was the nearest point to Moscow ever reached by the anti-Soviet forces.

At this time the official *communiqués* of both sides reported heavy fighting along the entire 700 miles front, and although during the next two weeks the line swayed considerably, the tide set in definitely in favour of the Red forces, despite temporary setbacks.

On October 19, 1919, the Red Army had to abandon Kiev, but on the same day it occupied Orel and won an important victory near Voronezh. On October 24 it occupied that town and on the following day Novosil. For the "Whites" the "Retreat from Moscow" had now definitely begun. On the last day of the month the Moscow wireless was able to announce a steady advance of the Reds along a wide front. It will be worth while to stop and recall the impression created in Britain by the advance on and capture of Orel by General Denikin, and to take a glance at what was actually happening behind the Red front.

The Times, in a leading article, October 14, 1919, declared:

"Except by our fault or through some reversal of military fortune which no one can forecast, the Bolshevist Government is nearing its end, and it is quite conceivable that a continuance of the successes of GENERAL DENIKIN may bring about in the next few weeks a sudden collapse. He is now on the outskirts of Orel, which is as near to Moscow as Manchester to London, and we should be much surprised if a Government based on terrorism, as the Bolshevist Government is, had the resolution to stand at the last ditch."

The *Daily Telegraph* went one better. On October 16, 1919, it published a leader headed "SOVIET COLLAPSING." In the course of the article it declared:

"Alarm at the irresistible advance of the Volunteers is spreading far and wide in Moscow and the surrounding country, and the situation is every day becoming more serious for the Bolsheviks. Denikin's advance has been practically uninterrupted since May. He has pushed forward over 300 miles along the direct line to Moscow, has laid hands on the whole of South Russia, the granary of the country, has increased his armies to something like five times their former strength, has shown himself to be the complete master of the Bolshevik generals, and grows in power every day. At present there seems no probability that the Bolsheviks will check his advance."

As to what was really happening behind the "Red Lines," we learn from the well-known journalist, Mr. Arthur Ransome, who was there at the time. He wrote:

"When I crossed the Russian front in October 1919, the first thing I noticed in peasants' cottages, in the villages, in the little town where I took the railway to Moscow, in every railway station along the line, was the elaborate pictorial propaganda concerned with the war. There were posters showing Denikin standing straddle over

Russia's coal, while the factory chimneys were smokeless and the engines idle in the yards, with the simplest wording to show why it was necessary to beat Denikin in order to get coal; there were posters illustrating the treatment of the peasants by the Whites; posters against desertion; posters illustrating the Russian struggle against the rest of the world, showing a workman, a peasant, a sailor and a soldier fighting in self-defence against an enormous Capitalistic Hydra. There were also—and this I took as a sign of what might be—posters encouraging the sowing of corn, and posters explaining in simple pictures improved methods of agriculture. Our own recruiting propaganda during the war, good a that was, was never developed to such a point of excellence."

It was clear that the Soviet Government was not only not making any attempt to hide the truth from its citizens, but was brutally frank. Respecting the strength of the Soviet Government at that time, Mr. Ransome wrote, "I could not but realise that the Government was stronger then than it had been in February of the same year, when it had a series of victories, and peace with the Allies seemed for a moment to be in sight."

Subsequent developments proved that Mr. Ransome's estimate of the situation was well founded.

Although the Soviet Government never hid the truth from its people when it was black and menacing, on the other hand when they were confident of success, but not before they were quite confident, they issued encouraging declarations. In an official communication to its people on October 30, 1919, the Soviet Government stated:

"On all fronts our enemies are retiring. If the question is put as to who is able to hold out the longer from a political, economic, and psychological point of view, we can definitely declare, without any doubt, that the advantage is on our side.

"In spite of the fact that Koltchak has mobilised all

the Cossacks of Siberia, he is retiring in haste, and his rout is near.

"Archangel will be ours in the course of a few weeks.

"Yudenitch, desiring to imitate Denikin, has been operating by the same methods of intimidation and rapid raids as the latter, but he has not succeeded, and now we are the attackers. Our aim is no longer merely to defend Petrograd, but definitely to crush Yudenitch. In two or three more weeks we shall have finished with him.

"On the southern front we have learnt the art of fighting against the enemy's methods. Denikin's position is hopeless.

"Following upon the enormous task of organisation accomplished by us in the last six months, our forces and our resources have increased to such an extent that victory is assured to us."

The *Morning Post* and others described this as a "boastful message," but the course of events proved that it was a sober estimate of the then military situation.

November 1919 opened badly for the "White" forces. General Denikin had to abandon Kroma on November 2, and Tchernigov (eighty miles N.N.E. of Kiev) on November 6, 1919. On November 12 the Soviet wireless reported that the Red Army had broken through General Denikin's centre on a front of forty-seven miles. It may have been merely coincidental, but on the following day the veil which hid from the British public what was transpiring in South Russia was partially raised in the House of Commons by the Prime Minister. He said:

"We are far too apt to examine the fight in Russia in the light of our experience of the great struggle in France. There an army of the size of General Denikin's or of that of his Bolshevist foes would hold a front of a little over 50 miles with well-organized communications behind. Here, such an army has to hold a front of 1,300 miles, with a vast country behind thoroughly disorganized, often

overrun by marauding bands, who temporarily capture and loot great cities in the recovered territories.

"There is the further complication of provincial or national movements like Petlura's. The result is that General Denikin has not so far been able to establish administrative control over the conquered territories."

It is clear that by this time Whitehall believed that Denikin's chances of ever reaching Moscow were very slender, and this view was shared in responsible journalistic circles : in the following issue of the *Observer* Mr. Garvin declared :

"In the south, based on the Black Sea and liberally furnished with British material, Denikin and his Cossacks were the 'white hope' of the anti-Bolshevists. After elaborate preparation he struck northwards, and at first seemed to be carrying all before him. A month ago he reached the furthest limit of his advance when he captured Orel, the important railway junction within two hundred miles of Moscow and only half that distance from the Bolshevist factories at Tula. He was soon driven out of Orel. His centre has been steadily pressed back. He cannot hope to take Moscow this year. His best chances are irretrievably gone. The Bolshevists on this front will now become stronger, not weaker, and he may easily find himself in jeopardy before long."

The Soviet Government, the British Prime Minister, and Mr. Garvin were justified by events : the Red Army entered Kursk on November 19 and captured Rijarva Junction (forty miles to the south-east of Kursk) and Rilsk (sixty miles west of Kursk) on November 21, 1919.

The British War Office in a semi-official statement in the Press of November 28, 1919, admitted that on a 160 miles front on either side of Kursk, and on a 100 miles front south of Tchernigov, the Red Army had penetrated to a depth of twenty-five miles. Up to this month the only wing of Denikin's forces which had been holding its own was his right

wing based on Tsaritsyn, but his official *communiqué* of November 29 announced "our Volga group have retired to the right bank of the Volga" and the Moscow *communiqué* of the same date stated that Red forces were only eight miles west and six and a half miles north-east of the town. Thus, at the end of the month Denikin's centre and both wings were being rapidly pushed back.

In December 1919 the Red Army won an almost unbroken series of victories. The attack along the entire front was steadily maintained and the Red forces occupied Bielgorod (thirty miles north of Kharkov) on December 8. On December 11 they occupied both Kharkov (the capital of the Ukraine) and Berditchev, 115 miles W.S.W. of Kiev. Two days later, December 13, they marched into Poltava, seventy miles S.S.W. of Kharkov.

At this time *The Times* had a representative in South Russia. On December 16 he cabled his paper from "Denikin's Headquarters" :

"The spectacular-like fall of Kharkov may easily give a wrong impression of the situation here. It is necessary, therefore, to say that in Denikin's armies there is no impression or expectation of defeat.

"At this moment the outlook is distinctly improving, as the result of the appointment of General Wrangel to be commander of the Volunteer Army in place of Maimaevsky."

At the same time, a British free-lance journalist, a Mr. C. E. Bechhofer, was also in South Russia. The impression created by the fall of Kharkov according to this gentleman was somewhat different. He wrote :

"I was in Rostov in December 1919 when the panic commenced. For days all sorts of rumours had been going round the town. The Bolshevists had broken through the lines ; they were advancing at full speed on the town ; and so on. The authorities told us not to worry, they assured us that the position at the front gave no cause for

alarm, and all the other usual quieting things. Then Kharkov fell, and thousands of unhappy refugees came down the line with the usual tale of official over-confidence culminating in panic, of cowardice, treachery, and betrayal."

Kiev fell into the hands of the Red forces on December 16, 1919, the very day on which *The Times* representative sent his reassuring cable.

The advance of the Red Army south of both Kiev and Kharkov continued: Fastov was occupied on December 24, Lugansk (in the Donetz) on the 27th, Ekaterinoslav and Likhaya (an important railway junction on the Rostov–Tsaritsyn railway) on December 31, 1919. The gains in the last week of the month were of immense significance and strategical importance: they meant that Denikin's army had been cut in two, that the Donetz Coal Basin was again in the hands of the Red Army, and that Denikin's hold on Tsaritsyn was so imperilled that its fall was imminent. *The "White" Army's famous "March on Moscow" was a complete failure.*

The Soviet Government had every reason to feel optimistic when the New Year dawned. On January 1, 1920, their message to the Russian people read:

> "1919 was a year of victory for the working classes on the front and in the rear. It was a year of consolidation for the Soviet authority. The Red Army on the field of battle inflicted deadly, decisive blows against counter-revolution. Under the mighty blows of the Red Army the horde of Tsarist generals has melted away. With red standards and a shout of victory we shall break into the New Year of 1920.
>
> "In 1920 we shall attain a victorious end to the civil war. In all Siberia, in the Ukraine, on the Don, in the Caucasus, they desire the Soviets."

Moscow's view was shared by Mr. Garvin. In the *Observer* he commented:

> "At this moment it cannot be doubted that Lenin and Trotsky are once more equipped with much of the material we had provided for their opponents. The Bolshevists will soon be in effective possession of four-fifths of the former Russian Empire, including the vast bulk of all its agricultural and mineral resources.
>
> "All across South Russia Denikin has been smashed in spite of his British material and equipment. His armies, thinly stretched over an enormous front, have been nearly cut in two. The Bolshevist cavalry in the centre is within a day's ride of the Black Sea. Denikin is being driven back into the original corner of the Caucasus from which he made the Cossack sweep which has come to nothing. Even if he can keep his old basis in the Caucasus itself, his position, in view of all events elsewhere, will be far more isolated and precarious than ever.
>
> "It is futile to deny that Lenin and Trotsky have proved themselves brilliant organisers and strategists. They have utterly outmatched their opponents in military vigour and judgment as well as in every other point of energy and brains."

The expectations of Moscow and Mr. Garvin were well-founded and the Red Army quickly added fresh laurels to its former victories. On January 3, 1920, Tsaritsyn was occupied by the Soviet forces, and much booty captured. The official *communiqué* issued by Moscow stated:

> "The booty taken by the Soviet troops at Tsaritsyn, as at Dolia, Yusovka, and Ilovayskaya, is enormous. Thus it is that the English, through the intermediate channel of the White Guards, are supplying Soviet Russia with war material."

The occupation of Tsaritsyn was of immense strategical importance, because it opened the road to the Caucasus from the north-east.

Three days later, January 6, 1920, Taganrog was

captured by the Red Army, which meant that the Soviet strategy had been completely successful and that the "White" Army had been cut in two. The Red Command pressed home the important gains in this sector : the Soviet forces occupied Novo-Tcherkask (the capital of the Province of the Don Cossacks) on January 10, 1920, and on the following day they marched into Rostov-on-Don.

General Denikin's officers showed their gratitude to Great Britain by very nearly leaving the British Military Mission behind when they evacuated Rostov-on-Don. *The Times* Correspondent, after his safe arrival in Novorossisk, thus describes what occurred :

"On New Year's Day I was quietly writing, when a telephone message came telling me to board a train by 6 in the evening. I had about three hours to pack in and settle all my affairs, and by 6 we were at the station with our luggage. At 8 we got into a third-class carriage retained by the British Railway Mission, expecting to leave the same evening.

"And then our troubles began. We were promised from hour to hour that we should be coupled on to the next train, and train after train went off without us. We were shunted on to various sidings and left stranded for hours. We saw trains come in—generals' trains, goods trains. We crunched over the snow ; and when the snow melted, ploughed through interminable slush trying to find our ever-elusive coach.

"On the third day of our waiting symptoms of organisation appeared. The crowd on the station thinned down. Officers' patrols, including generals and colonels, mounted guard with the help of British military police.

"That night we finally got away. We should have been left behind again if we had not discovered very nearly at the last moment that our coach had again been struck off the list. Then, by dint of strong representations from the British Railway Mission, and negotiations with shunters and pointsmen and everybody else concerned, we did manage to get coach No. 635 coupled on to a so-called fast train.

"On the evening of the second day we reached windy Novorossisk ; and on the following morning left the coach that had sheltered us five days."

The Red Army advance was not confined to the centre, it continued along the entire front. From Tsaritsyn the Soviet forces pushed along the railway in the direction of Ekaterinodar, and from Astrakhan across the steppes towards the railway running from Novo-Tcherkask to Baku, i.e. into Northern Caucasia. North of the Crimea they occupied Uman and Nikopol on January 15, 1920.

The most stubborn fight was put up by the "White" Army along the lower reaches of the Don and its tributaries in that area. On January 30, 1920, the Moscow bulletin chronicled an advance of the Red Army in the Lower Don 14 miles south of Rostov, the occupation of the town of Golovanets (112 miles north of Odessa), the occupation of Semenovka (75 miles north of Nikolaiev), together with the occupation of the town of Perekop, near the western Crimean Isthmus.

Moscow had good reasons to congratulate itself on its many successes in January 1920.

General Denikin's left wing continued to give ground (it would be almost correct to say melted) very rapidly. The Red Army occupied Nikolaiev and Kherson on February 2, and Odessa on February 7, 1920.

The extent to which the "White" forces were demoralised by this date can be gauged by the cabled descriptions of conditions in Odessa immediately preceding its occupation by the Reds. Mr. Percival Landon cabled the *Daily Telegraph* :

"It may seem incredible, but it is actually true, that so enormous have been the losses—chiefly from typhus—among the rank and file of the Volunteer Army, and so

continuous the stream of unrequired officers into the one city of luxury behind Denikin's line, that some 20,000 of the latter were present when the havoc began in Odessa last Thursday. In all that number not even a handful was found to organise the defence, either of the wretched inhabitants or of themselves.

The Times Correspondent wrote :

" Odessa was full of officers, variously estimated at tens of thousands, and they appeared to be spending all their time in restaurants and cafés. Many took to drinking and carousing to such an extent that the peaceful inhabitants were as much afraid of them as they were of the Bolshevists."

General Schilling and some of his troops were transported to the Crimea, some thousands of refugees were evacuated to Constantinople, many of the " White " Army soldiers went over to the Soviets, and others retreated westwards towards the Roumanian and Polish frontiers.

While the military and civil evacuation of Odessa was taking place British battleships then in the harbour fired on the incoming Red Army troops and delayed their advance until the last transports had left the port. After the occupation of Odessa, Denikin's troops, operating between the Crimea and the Polish-Roumanian frontiers, rapidly melted away as a serious fighting force. Many went over to the Soviets, and the following cable to *The Times* dated March 3, 1920, Warsaw, brings the tale to an end :

" A large detachment of the Russian Volunteer Army, under General Bredov, Governor of Kiev last autumn, has reached the Polish lines in the neighbourhood of Kamenetz-Podolsk. They are the remains of Denikin's troops west of the Dnieper, which have been without a base since the Bolshevist occupation of Odessa.

" About three-quarters of the whole company are reported to be infected with typhus. This miserable wreck of an army has been making its way north seeking sanctuary, for the troops no longer represent an effective fighting force. The Rumanians refused them a passage of the Dniester, whereupon General Bredov entered into negotiations with the Polish General Krajewski at Dunajowce."

Meanwhile, severe fighting was taking place along the lower reaches of the Don and its tributaries, the Manitch and the Sal, also in the direction of Stavropol and further east along the steppes between Kisliar and Astrakhan. In the first three weeks of February 1920 the battle line swayed backwards and forwards. On February 20, 1920, the " White " Army recaptured Rostov, but was driven out again with heavy losses two days later.

The Red forces occupied the important railway junction of Tikhoretskaya (about 110 miles south of Novo-Tcherkasskand 86 miles north-east of Ekaterinodar) which sealed the fate of Denikin's army in this area. The Moscow *communiqué* announcing the capture of the town added : " Denikin is caught in a mouse trap on the Kuban Peninsula," a statement which the development of events justified.

The important town of Stavropol in the Northern Caucasus was also occupied on February 28, 1920, by the Soviet forces, which now advanced on a wide front, from east of Rostov to north of Stavropol, i.e. parallel with the railway running from Rostov to Petrovsk, at the same time its armoured trains and cavalry advanced down both the railways which converge on Ekaterinodar.

It is instructive to recall what was happening at this time in Ekaterinodar, and the port through which it received its supplies, Novorossisk. The Special Correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* cabled to his paper from Novorossisk on March 1, 1920 :

" Immense supplies have reached Novorossisk, Ekaterinodar, Rostov, and other centres, for the army and the

people. They gazed at the ships. They did not unload them, nor see to it that all these good things were used to feed, clothe, and defend them. Ships lay for weeks alongside the quays, but nobody discharged them. The stevedores, the soldiers, the manual labourers had their fill by robbery. Futile were the appeals of the few energetic and patriotic Russians, stimulated and organised by British officers. The same was the case when attempts were made to police the towns, distribute food and comforts, or provide medical attention for the suffering.

"The corruption before the war was child's-play compared with the swindling rampant nowadays. It is, and must be, the only means of livelihood of the army of officials otherwise dependent upon derisory salaries which they do not receive.

"Within six weeks of January last stores to the value of at least £250,000 were stolen in Novorossisk. Supplied by the British, whose control the Russians have stipulated must cease when the goods were delivered upon the quay, this precious provision for the troops and the people for weeks was heaped at the dockside under 35 degrees of frost. Anybody could help himself, and few missed the opportunity. Deep resentment was aroused whenever the British authorities offered assistance and advice for the safe keeping and distribution of these stores to the starving and shoeless army and suffering civilians. The Russians claimed to be masters in their own house, but they are not. For example, piles of leather jerkins had been discharged from a ship in the presence of British officers. They urged this invaluable clothing should be removed at once. Nothing was done by the Russian authorities. Some days later the British officers witnessed the arrival of a shunting loc motive to the point at which the jerkins were stacked. The engine gave forth a cloud of steam, and from the footplate sprang several men. Each seized a bundle of the garments, reboarded the footplate, grinning at the officers, and the locomotive steamed quietly away."

And as regards the Russian "Whites," combatants and non-combatants, who had been evacuated to Constantinople by the British and Allied vernments—*The Times* Correspondent cabled from Constantinople on March 15, 1920:

"At the same time, their own military agents here are endeavouring to hold up all Russians of military age with the intention of sending them back to defend the Crimea, that peninsula being the only territory likely soon to be left to as many of the Volunteer troops as will stick to their duty till the last. None of the Russians here wants to fight any more, and I cannot see how they are to be returned to Russia against their will unless the Allies forcibly repatriate them. Many surmount, or elude, the difficulty of securing passports and visas for Western Europe and succeed in getting away.

"The British burden in all this business appears to be by far the heaviest, if we take into account the work of evacuation in general. And it is not lightened in any way by the host of wealthy Russians from across the Black Sea, who patronize the first-class hotels and fashionable restaurants of Pera, spend money like millionaires, and drink copiously to celebrate their fortunate escape. They would appear to be celebrating victory instead of defeat. There is no doubt that many have made large fortunes out of the distress of their fellow-countrymen."

Throughout this period events were moving rapidly in Caucasia. Denikin left Ekaterinodar on March 14, 1920, and the Red Army occupied the town three days later, taking 15,000 prisoners and a great amount of booty. At the same time the Soviet forces continued to drive the remnants of the "White" Army up against the Caucasian mountains and on March 17, 1920, the former occupied Georgievsk, a town situated about midway between Tikhoretskaya and Petrovsk on the Rostov–Baku railway.

Denikin, after the loss of his capital, Ekaterinodar, made

hurried preparations to evacuate Novorossisk, which meant a complete evacuation of the mainland. The Allied Governments, at Denikin's request, supplied transports to convey his troops and supplies to the Crimea, and also refugees to Constantinople and other ports as well as to the Crimea, and (to quote a *communiqué* issued by the Press Association dated March 24, 1920) " the warships of Great Britain, France, Italy, the U.S.A. and Greece " stood by " to protect the evacuation." On March 27, 1920, the Red Army entered Novorossisk.

There was no question about the aid given to Denikin's forces by the British Navy during the evacuation. An official *communiqué* issued by the British War Office declared :

> " The British naval authorities, by the most strenuous exertions, and at the last moment, were able to embark on the various vessels waiting in the port a large number of the Volunteer forces who have put up so heroic a struggle during the past months."

As already mentioned, part of the " White " Army accompanied Denikin to the Crimea, thousands of his soldiers went over to the Soviet forces, whilst others retreated along the coast towards Tuapse.

Meanwhile the Red Army was completing its conquest of the entire area north of the Caucasian Mountains. The famous oil centre of Grozny was occupied on March 24, 1920, and shortly afterwards the Caspian port of Petrovsk fell to the Red Army. The capture of these two centres sealed the fate of the " White " Caspian flotilla, as it lost both the source of its oil supply and its port.

All these events now convinced even the most ardent admirers of the " Whites " in Britain that although the Red Army had still much to do in the rounding up of isolated bands, Denikin's army had ceased to exist as a serious fighting force. *The Times* in a leader (immediately after the fall of Novorossisk) discussing the failures of Koltchak and Denikin commented :

> " Both men, unhappily, were soldiers without statesmanship. They were surrounded by representatives of the old Tsarist system, too stupid to apprehend the greatness of the transformation which had already taken place, but astute enough to mislead the military chiefs. The result was that the soldiers failed to organize the countries behind their lines and to win the solid support of the populations.
>
> " Had the Allies even warned them of the political mistakes into which they were being led, and advised them on the right course to follow, the chances are that they would have established popular governments in their rear, which would have added immensely to their military power."

What an exhibition of naïveté ! Both of these worthies had given ample proof that their aim was the restoration of Tsardom : they had restored it in everything but name in the territories in which they had temporarily held sway.

And who could have expected Koltchak and Denikin, together with their military and civil *entourages*, to establish " popular governments " in view of the conceptions which these people held of the Russian masses, as witness—among many others—the evidence of Mr. J. E. Hodgson, *Daily Express* Special Correspondent with the anti-Bolshevik forces :

> " I have spoken to many Russians who sighed for the return of the old régime and who laughed at me for speaking of the illiterate lower classes in Russia as being their equals before the Lord. These officers placed their unfortunate compatriots upon a level with the negroes of our Empire " (*With Denikin's Armies*, p. 186).

This conception of the " lower classes " found its expression, among other ways, in the treatment of their soldiers :

> " It was repeatedly explained to me that the private soldier was composed of such common clay that he could be controlled only by brutalization. By clinging desperately to such ideas the class from which the officers were

drawn proved its own inability to grasp and digest historical facts (*With Denikin's Armies*, p. 78).

Can one conceive the Denikins and Koltchaks granting equal political democractic rights to the "lower classes" and the "common clay"?

The Soviet forces now rapidly completed the campaign in the Caucasus, the Caspian flotilla sailed to Enzeli (on the Persian coast) and was there interned; a Soviet Republic was proclaimed in Baku on April 28, 1920, which immediately federated with Moscow, and the remnants of the "White" Army retreated along the shores of the Black Sea coast, first to Tuapse and then to Sotchy. At the latter port a number (aided by Allied warships) embarked for the Crimea and those who remained surrendered to the Red Army. The "White" Army was now in possession only of the Crimea.

The series of defeats which had culminated in the evacuation of Novorossisk had convinced the British Government that the "White" cause was hopeless, and they became anxious to rid themselves of their embarrassing protégés. Thousands of officers and officials of the "Volunteer Army," together with their families, had been evacuated to Princes Island (in the Sea of Marmora), to Constantinople and to certain ports on the Mediterranean, and the Crimea was fearfully overcrowded both with combatants and non-combatants. No country wanted these refugees. The only solution lay in an accommodation with the victorious Bolsheviks, and the first step was taken.

On April 2, 1920, Admiral de Robeck, the British High Commissioner in Constantinople, sent the following note to General Denikin:

"The Supreme Council (of the Allies) is of the opinion that, on the whole, the prolongation of the Russian Civil War is the most disturbing factor in the present European situation.

"His Britannic Majesty's Government wishes to suggest

to General Denikin that, in view of the present situation, an arrangement with the Soviet Government for an amnesty for the Crimean population in general, and the Volunteer Army in particular, would be in the interests of all concerned.

"The British Government is absolutely convinced that the abandonment of this unequal struggle will be the best thing for Russia, and will therefore take upon itself the task of making this arrangement, once it has General Denikin's consent. Furthermore, it offers him and his principal supporters hospitality and a refuge in Great Britain.

"The British Government has, in the past, given him a large amount of assistance, *and this is the only reason why he has been able to continue the struggle up to the present*; therefore they feel justified in hoping that he will accept their proposal. If, however, General Denikin should feel it his duty to refuse, and to continue a manifestly hopeless struggle, the British Government will find itself obliged to renounce all responsibility for his actions, and to cease to furnish him with any help or subvention of any kind from that time on" (our italic).

Two days later General Denikin resigned, sailed from the Crimea to Constantinople, *en route* for Western Europe. He appointed General Wrangel "Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of South Russia," and as such the latter had to deal with the note. Addressing a conference of his "superior officers" on April 14, 1920, Wrangel said:

"The English have decided to withdraw from the game. If we reject their mediation, our refusal will give them a pretext for washing their hands of us and withdrawing altogether. I will most certainly never countenance negotiations between ourselves and the Bolshevists. But I think the most important thing is to avoid giving England an opportunity to leave us in the lurch. We must throw the odium of these negotiations upon England, and

prolong them until we have attended to our fortifications, put the Army and the rear in order, and secured coal and oil for the Fleet in case of an evacuation" (*Memoirs of General Wrangel*, p. 144).

On the same day General Wrangel cabled Admiral de Robeck :

"General Denikin has issued a General Order appointing me Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of South Russia, and I have already entered upon my duties. The British Government's categorical demand that we cease fighting makes it impossible for my Army to continue. I put upon the British Government all the moral responsibility for the consequences of the decision they have made. I do not admit the absolute possibility of direct negotiations with the enemy ; but I leave the fate of the Army, the Navy, the population of the occupied territory, and all those who have actually fought on our side, to the good offices of the British Government. I consider that those who have deprived the Armies of South Russia of their support at the most critical moment, even though these Armies have in the past shown constant loyalty to the Allied cause, are in honour bound to ensure the inviolability of every member of the armed forces, of the population in the occupied regions, of the refugees who wish to return to Russia, and of all those who have fought the Bolshevists and are now in the Soviet prisons of Russia. I have the right to ask my subordinates to sacrifice their lives for the safety of their country, but I cannot ask them to accept an amnesty from the enemy and profit by it, if they consider it dishonourable. Therefore it is absolutely necessary that the British Government should be prepared to offer a refuge outside Russia to the Commander-in-Chief and his principal colleagues, and also to all those who prefer expatriation to the clemency of the enemy. I am ready to accept the simplest living-conditions for these people once they are abroad, in order

to ensure that only those whose sentiments prevent them from accepting the amnesty will take advantage of the opportunity. It is understood that I give myself first place amongst the above. It is necessary that the armistice question be settled as soon as possible, so that work may be put in hand immediately by the agents of the English Command attached to my General Staff. The Crimea must not be handed over to the Soviet Command for at least two months from the time when the negotiations are completed, in order that the operations connected with the cessation of fighting, and the liquidation of the administrative, military, and civil organs, may be accomplished peacefully. During this period the Allies must continue to furnish the Army and the population of the occupied regions with everything that is necessary for them.—WRANGEL" (ibid., pp. 147–8).

General Wrangel's manœvure to prolong the negotiations succeeded and the British Government acted on his stipulations. The British warships in the Black Sea continued to assist him. Walter Long, First Lord of the Admiralty, admitted in the House of Commons that H.M.S. *Steadfast* had fired on the Red Army, advancing along the Black Sea coast on April 16, 1920, and that "His Majesty's ships had orders to support General Wrangel" in defending the Crimea.

After a number of notes had passed between London and Moscow, the following note was sent to Wrangel on April 19, 1920, by Admiral Seymour on behalf of His Majesty's Government :

"The Admiralty begs to inform you that on Saturday, April 17th, Lord Curzon sent a telegram to M. Chicherin saying that although the Armed Forces of South Russia have been defeated, they cannot be allowed to go on to disaster, and that should M. Chicherin not reply without delay that he is at least ready to accept Lord Curzon's mediation and suspend all further offensive action in the south, His Majesty's Government will be obliged to order

His Majesty's Fleet to take all necessary steps for the protection of the Crimean Army and the prevention of the invasion of their place of retreat by the Soviet forces."

There can be little doubt that the Red Army could at this time have overrun the Crimea, but the Moscow authorities stayed their hand for fear of imperilling the negotiations then proceeding with the Allied Governments for the opening of trade through the Russian Co-operatives—a restraint which was to cost them dear before many weeks had passed.

Whilst the wires were busy between Moscow and London, the "White" Army behind the protection of the British and Allied warships was being re-formed, and supplies from the Allies flowed into the Crimea.

The negotiations on Wrangel's behalf did not lead to definite results (as no doubt Wrangel had all along expected) and the British Government finally decided to renounce the thankless rôle of mediators. On April 29, 1920, the Chief of the British Military Mission in Sebastopol, in a note to General Wrangel on behalf of his Government, declared :

"The answers that we have received from M. Chicherin in reference to our attempts to make terms for General Wrangel's Crimean forces have not been encouraging up to now.

"Therefore we are powerless for the moment to obtain what General Wrangel demands. Should we be unable to make terms for him, as seems probable, the only alternative is for him to do what he can for himself. Should General Wrangel prolong the struggle, it can have only one result, and we cannot encourage it by subsidies in money or kind."

However, the British Government did not by any means wash its hands of the negotiations nor withdraw help from General Wrangel. The Secretary of State for War, Churchill, informed the House of Commons on April 20, 1920, that the British Military Mission in the Crimea was helping Wrangel to reorganise his fighting forces. Long, First Lord of the Admiralty, stated from the Treasury Bench on May 11,

1920, that British warships in the Black Sea would continue to bombard the Russian coast until such time as an armistice between the opposing Russian forces had been concluded ; and Bonar Law, Leader of the House of Commons, declared in that Assembly on May 12, 1920, that this country was continuing to furnish Wrangel with military supplies. In fact this threefold process of help went on until Wrangel (aided by the Polish advance on Kiev with which we shall deal in the next chapter) advanced north out of the Crimea in June 1920.

It will be worth while to consider for a moment here the rôle which the Russian Church played in the re-organisation of the "White" forces. We cannot do better than to quote from General Wrangel :

"On March 25th,[1] a solemn Te Deum was followed by a review of the troops in Nahimov Square. After Mass had been celebrated in the Cathedral, a religious procession, headed by Bishop Benjamin, wound its way to the Nahimov Square, accompanied by the pealing of bells. On the way it was joined by processions coming from other churches. The troops were deployed all along Ekaterinaskaia Street and round the Square. An altar had been set up in front of Admiral Nahimov's monument. By it stood a group of well-known people and representatives from the Allied Missions. The surrounding windows, balconies, and even roofs, were crowded with onlookers. The day was sunny and calm, the blue sky was reflected in the still bay as in a mirror. The hymns poured out into the silence in wave after wave of sweet sound ; not a flame of one of those innumerable tapers stirred ; the smoke floated up from the incense in translucent clouds. After the religious service, Bishop Benjamin read the Senate's edict which had arrived the night before, and which enjoined the whole population to unite under the new Commander-in-Chief" (*Memoirs of General Wrangel*, pp. 157–8).

[1] April 7, 1920, by the Western European Calendar.

This single passage expresses in microcosm the relationship of the Russian Church to the autocracy ; the former was the latter's subservient tool.

There is one very important additional matter to which we must refer here. Of the many crimes of which Denikin and his administration stand convicted, perhaps the most cowardly and revolting of all were the atrocities committed on the defenceless Jews. Denikin formally refused to declare the Jews equal before the law or to guard them against pogroms. The mental attitude of Denikin's officers towards Jews can be gauged from the reports of the representative of the *Daily Express* then in South Russia :

" I had not been with Denikin more than a month before I was forced to the conclusion that the Jew represented a very big element in the Russian upheaval. The officers and men of the Army laid practically all the blame for their country's troubles on the Hebrew " (*With Denikin's Armies*, p. 54).

" It was useless to ask Denikin's officers to infuse a little of sweet reasonableness into their outlook " (*With Denikin's Armies*, p. 58).

The ghastly results of this attitude of mind were portrayed as follows by the Chief Rabbi in Great Britain, Dr. J. H. Hertz, in his pamphlet entitled *A Decade of Woe and Hope*, published in 1923 :

" Three million Jews of the Ukraine were handed over, helpless and hopeless, to murder and dishonour. . . . Historians have for centuries dwelt on the tragedy and inhumanity of the expulsion of the 150,000 Jews of Spain. But throughout 1919 and 1920 we have had in the Ukraine not merely the expulsion of a similar number of human beings, but their extermination by the wild hordes of Denikin, Petlura, Grigoriev, Makhno, and other bandits, raging like wild beasts amid the defenceless Jewries of South Russia. ' The massacres of the Jews in the Ukraine can find, for thoroughness and extent, no

parallel except in the massacres of the Armenians,' IS THE VERDICT OF SIR HORACE RUMBOLD, H.M. MINISTER AT WARSAW, in a report to the Foreign Office that was widely circulated at the time. Wholesale slaughter and violation, drownings, and burnings and burials alive, became not merely commonplaces, but the order of the day. There were pogroms that lasted a week ; and in several towns the diabolic torture and outrage and carnage were continued for a month. In many populous Jewish communities there were no Jewish survivors left to bury the dead, and thousands of Jewish wounded and killed were eaten by dogs ; in others, the synagogues were turned into charnel houses by the pitiless butchery of those who sought refuge in them. If we add to the figures mentioned above, the number of the indirect victims who, in consequence of the robbery and destruction that accompanied these massacres, were swept away by famine, disease, exposure, and all manner of privations —the dread total will be very near half-a-million human beings.

" Yet all this persecution, torture, slaughter, continued for nearly two years without any protest by the civilised Powers, with hardly any notice in the English Press of this systematic extermination. And if you even consult the latest volumes of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and turn to the article ' Ukraine,' you will not find the slightest reference, not by a single word, to this black page in all the dark and blood-stained annals of Europe. This conspiracy of silence has been but too successful."

Giving details of a single pogrom, the Chief Rabbi stated :

" The pogrom of Fastov was organised by detachments of Denikin's army immediately on their occupation of the town at the end of September, 1919. One thousand Jews were slaughtered, and a great number of women and girls were violated. It was with truly bestial fury that the soldiers threw themselves on young girls before the very

eyes of their helpless parents. Particularly revolting scenes took place in the court of the synagogues, whe e the Jews had sought refuge. The whole court was strewn with bodies of old men, women and children, and violated girls. Many people went mad. Sixty Jews sought shelter in the church, but the soldiers surrounded it and killed the Jews in it ; and then burned all the Jewish houses in the town."

On the same page from which this exce pt is taken, the Chief Rabbi stated that " there were no less than 150 pog oms carried out by the Denikin Army."

As Denikin advanced towards Moscow in the spring and early summer of 1919, circumstantial reports of these and other atrocities percolated through to Britain and other Western European countries via Constantinople. These rumours were adding fuel to the flames of the widespread agitation then being conducted in Great Britain against the policy of supporting Denikin and his confederates with military and other supplies, and were undoubtedly further embarrassing the Government.

In July 1919 the Chief of the British Military Mission to General Denikin, General Sir C. G. Briggs, returned to London and in the course of an interview with a representative of Reuter's agency declared :

" On my return to England my attention was drawn to certain statements as to ' atrocities ' and various forms of outrage resulting from General Denikin's administration, and I am glad to take the earliest opportunity on my arrival in England to say that from beginning to end they are utterly false and are prompted by German and Bolshevist propaganda."

About a fortnight later Sir C. G. Briggs, speaking at a meeting of M.P.s at the House of Commons (at which the War Minister, Winston Churchill, was present), said that " he had never heard of any excesses by Denikin's men."

Is it possible that General Briggs spoke without the consent

of the War Office ? His statements were undoubtedly at once cabled to South Russia by the " White " Diplomatic representatives in London. Could anyone have doubted that Denikin and his officers would have interpreted these declarations as implying that the British Government was prepared to support the Denikin administration through and through !

At any rate the atrocities certainly continued, particularly with respect to the Jews, so much so that on September 18, 1919, Winston Churchill cabled to South Russia : " It is of the very highest consequence that General Denikin should not only do everything in his power to prevent massacres of the Jews in the liberated districts, but should issue a proclamation against Anti-Semitism," and again on October 7, 1919, Churchill cabled Denikin urging him " to redouble efforts to restrain Anti-Semitic feeling and to vindicate the honour of the Voluntee Army " (*The World Crisis : The Aftermath*, p. 255). These cables were not published at the time and were only revealed some years later.

It is with relief one turns from this recital of horrors to read :

" An objective study of the investigations of the authorised agent of the relief committee of the Red Cross and the annals of the Jews in the Ukraine leads to the conclusion that the Soviet troops preserved the Jews from complete annihilation. Retirement of the Soviet troops signified for the territory left behind the beginning of a period of pogroms with all their horrors. On the other hand, the advance of the Soviet troops meant the liberation from a nightmare " (*The Slaughter of the Jews in the Ukraine in 1919*, by E. Heifetz, p. 97).

General Denikin and his Government were mildly admonished in private, but exonerated in public and throughout the whole of this ghastly period they were never threatened in the only way which they would have understood, viz. that unless their barbarism ceased, there would be a cessation of supplies.

CHAPTER XVI

THE POLISH ATTACK

POLAND as an independent State disappeared from the map of Europe at the date of the third partition in 1795 by the Russian, Prussian and Austrian Empires.

After the military collapse of Tsarist Russia in 1917 a "Polish State" under the control of the Polish Council of Regency was set up by the German Government, but this Council or Civil Administration was subordinate to the German Generals commanding the Army of Occupation.

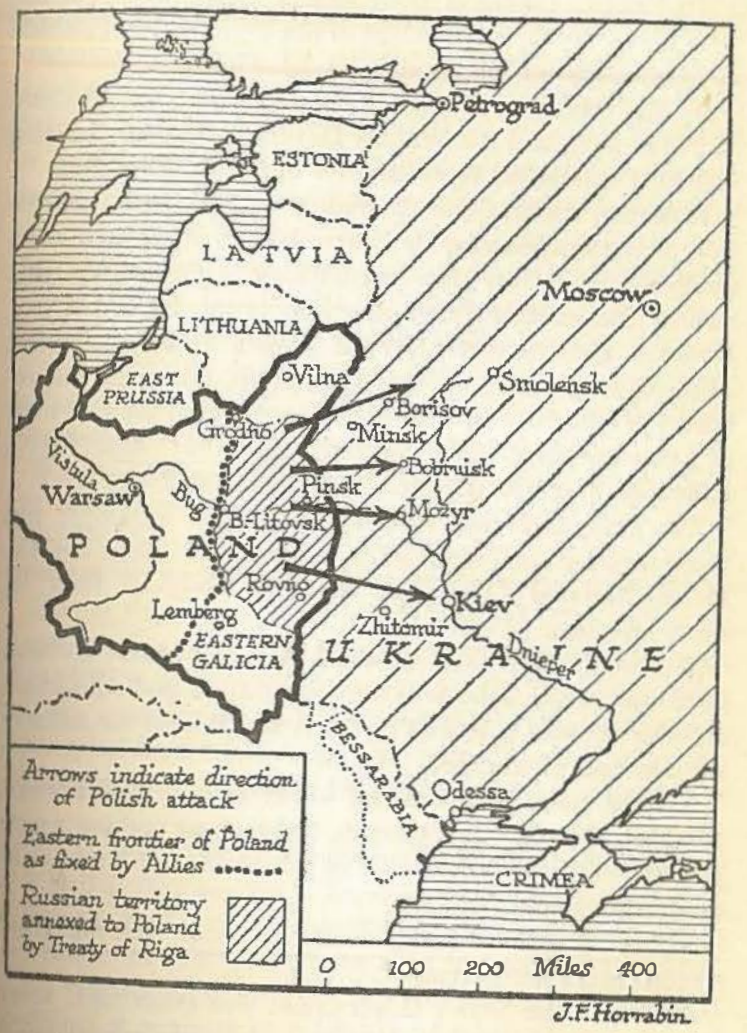
Meanwhile a Polish National Committee, supported by most Poles outside of Poland, had been set up in Paris, and had raised an army of 50,000 under General Haller (partly from prisoners of war of Polish nationality and partly from Poles living in Allied countries, particularly the U.S.A.), which had rendered valuable aid to the Allied Forces in France and Italy.

The National Committee in Paris, whose accredited representative was Paderewski, was recognised by the Allied Governments as representing, *de facto*, the Polish people.

One of President Wilson's famous "Fourteen Points" stipulated the restoration of Polish independence. It read:

> "An independent Polish State should be erected, which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea, and whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenant."

In the Armistice terms of November 11, 1918, the Allies stipulated the withdrawal from Russian and Polish territory



of all German and Austrian troops, and as the latter withdrew to their respective Fatherlands, they gave up their arms to, or were disarmed by, the Poles. The independence of Poland was formally declared on November 11, 1918, and three days later the Polish Council of Regency dissolved; a Provisional Coalition Government came into existence with Moraczewski as President of the Council and Pilsudski as Commander of the Army.

At first there was a conflict between the National Committee in Paris and the Warsaw Government, each claiming to be the accredited representative of the Polish nation.

However, the National Committee in Paris sent a delegation to Warsaw, headed by Paderewski, to effect an accommodation, and this they accomplished. Paderewski persuaded the existing Government to retire, formed a new coalition Government and was himself chosen as Prime Minister on January 16, 1919. Pilsudski, however, was retained as Chief of State. Elections were held in the first week of February 1919, which resulted: National "Bloc" (pro-Paderewski) 400 seats; Socialists 80; Jewish Party 15.

The new realm was formally declared a Republic, was recognised by the Powers as an independent State, and the Polish National Committee in Paris dissolved itself on April 15, 1919.

One of the first tasks to which the Provisional Government had set its hand was the organisation and equipment of an army, and it looked to the Allied Powers for military supplies and instructors.

At that time, to quote the words of our then Foreign Minister, the late Lord Curzon, "there was nothing necessary to public or private life of which Poland was not in most urgent need."

Above all, Poland stood in need of peace with her great eastern neighbour, Russia.

As far as the Soviet Government was concerned, there were no difficulties. It had recognised Polish independence without any qualifications, and would have been quite

willing to give Poland a frontier in accordance with President Wilson's declaration.

However, there were forces both inside and outside of Poland which were not satisfied with an eastern frontier for Poland, limited by ethnographical principles, and, quite apart from that consideration, did not want peace between Warsaw and Moscow.

Marshal Pilsudski, by general admission to-day, was a romanticist. His aim was not the re-establishment of the Polish State within its ethnological frontiers (as stipulated by President Wilson and accepted by the Allied Governments), but the re-establishment of the Polish Empire with its 1772 frontiers; frontiers which would have encircled more non-Poles than there were Poles in ethnographical Poland. Great Britain was not enamoured of this idea; diplomatic representatives in Paris of the Denikin–Koltchak Government were emphatically opposed to it, but the French favoured it. The Paris Press of December 1918 were declaring that a powerful Poland was a French necessity.

Within Poland itself some warning voices were raised, but even these voices were demanding some, although a more limited, extension eastwards beyond Poland's racial frontiers.

One of the first tasks to which Marshal Pilsudski set his hand, to the neglect of many urgent problems, was the organisation of an army primarily for the object of staking out an unjustifiable and extensive claim beyond Poland's ethnographic frontiers on the east. Count Alexander Skrzynski (Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs) wrote:

> "It will remain a lasting title to glory for Marshal Pilsudski that as soon as he took over the Government of Poland after the German retreat, and put himself at the head of the army, which was then in a state of formation, he concentrated his attention on the East in order to defend it against the Bolshevik advance. He was obliged to do this, putting aside temporarily all other political and

military problems, and be ready to accept the censure of a section of his fellow countrymen."[1]

As already mentioned, there was no necessity " to defend it [Poland] against the Bolshévik advance," because the Soviet Government was quite willing to recognise the independence of Poland within her racial frontiers, and at this date the Red Army had not crossed and was making no arrangements to cross the ethnographical frontiers of Poland.

Poland could have had peace and her eastern frontiers delimited without the expenditure of a single rifle cartridge. But unfortunately, egged on by France, and to a lesser extent by the U.S.A., Britain, and Italy, prevented from coming to terms with Moscow by the Peace Conference in Paris, and liberally furnished by the Allied Powers with military supplies,[2] she prepared for war with the Soviet Union.

The attitude of the Polish Government was not only a crime against Russia, it was a crime against its own people, because from the date of the establishment of Polish independence in November 1918, until an armistice was concluded with Russia in September 1920, the Polish masses, apart from war casualties, were decimated to an appalling degree by hunger and disease. These problems were subor inated to the lust of wealthy Polish landlords, led by Marshal Pilsudski, for imperialist expansion.

A glance at the cables published in the London Press from their Warsaw Correspondents fully confirm our strictures.

The Times of January 2, 1919, reported from their " Warsaw Correspondent " that as the factories in Lodz (the Manchester of Poland) had been destroyed during the World War, many thousands of workers in that city were unemployed and that on December 29, 1918, there had been

[1] *Poland and Peace*, by Count Alexander Skrzynski, p. 33.

[2] As far as Great Britain was concerned, these munitions were supplied without conditions. Poland was under no moral obligation not to use them for purposes of aggression. The following dialogue which took place in the House of Commons on May 17, 1920, is illuminating : " LORD R. CECIL asked whether at the time of the bargain any conditions were made as to the use the Polish Government were to make of the munitions? MR. BONAR LAW : Certainly not."

bloo shed in Warsaw. Madame Paderewski, wife of the Polish Premier, in an interview with the Press, said that children were dying for want of milk, and that in one school which she visited " there was not one child out of 200 who was not tuberculous."

Herbert Hoover (afterwards President of the U.S.A.) in a letter in *The Times* of July 7, 1919, declared : " The Poles do require a good deal of assistance (raw material and credits) during the next twelve months. . . . Beyond this, however, is the child problem, and every penny of assistance that the benevolent publics of the world can give to the Polish central committee for children at Warsaw is important."

The Times Correspondent cabled from Warsaw on August 15, 1919 :

" The outlook for the food supply of Poland is indeed black. Week after week of rainy weather has ruined the crops, and the harvest is estimated to be 20 to 30 per cent below the normal. Even before the bad weather began it was calculated that Poland would have to import 600,000 tons of foodstuffs in the coming year."

Reuter from their Paris office circulated a statement to the world Press on September 19, 1919, declaring :

"The Inter-Allied Medical Commission sent by the League of Red Cross Societies to investigate the situation created by the typhus epidemic in Poland has just returned to Paris.

" They found that the typhus epidemic this year has been very widespread and the number of deaths enormous. Colonel Cumming, the Assistant Surgeon-General of the American Public Health Service, who was chairman of the Commission, expressed the opinion that not only typhus, but relapsing fever, typhoid, and dysentery are prevalent, and the Commission considers that very severe epidemics will break out this winter unless most energetic measures are taken to deal with the situation in Poland and to prevent the spread of ty hus and other diseases to Western Europe and America."

The Times of November 15, 1919, published a cable from its Warsaw Correspondent in which he stated that a "desperate crisis" had arisen "through the shortage of food."

On November 22, 1919, *The Times* Correspondent cabled from Warsaw :

> "The Government estimates that the country will be 740,000 tons of grain short.
>
> "On the top of this there is the failure of the potato crop to be considered. Potatoes normally come second only to bread as a staple article of food in Poland."

The Warsaw Correspondent of the *Morning Post* cabled to his journal on March 12, 1920, that there had been a general strike in Poland. The cable continued : "The soundest opinion here is that the working classes, simply finding existence more and more intolerable, and that without any particular Bolshevist sympathies, took such measures as seemed within their power to remedy the matter."

It is unnecessary to labour the point further. The facts just cited are sufficient to demonstrate beyond doubt that, owing to the desperate economic conditions prevailing in the country, the Polish Government would not have dared to pursue a war policy towards Soviet Russia had it not been urged on by the Allied Governments.

Now as to the army—apart from the rifles, etc., taken from the German and Austrian troops returning home, the Polish Command was wholly dependent on the Allied Governments for supplies. *The Times* of December 27, 1918, published the following from its Warsaw Correspondent :

> "There is no lack of volunteers. Every man coming to his country's help to-day is a volunteer, and there are already over 60,000 of them. But this is the capital point —the Polish Government has not equipment for them. It has not boots for half, nor has it overcoats, nor has it rifles. The Poles have 14 aeroplanes, mostly old training machines, and about 70 guns."

The Allies came to Poland's assistance, or to be more correct, to the assistance of her war captains.

The Paris Correspondent of the *Morning Post* cabled his journal on April 16, 1919 :

> "General Haller left Paris this afternoon and expects to arrive in Warsaw on Sunday. Troops have already started. General Haller was accompanied by several French Generals and a large number of other French officers. Representatives of the British, French and Italian armies were present at the station to see him off."

The Polish Army grew rapidly in numbers. *The Times* Correspondent in Warsaw cabled to his paper on June 23, 1919 :

> "The handful of men who in November last, under the guidance of General Pilsudski, disarmed the German garrison and drove them out of Warsaw, has now grown into a respectable army, which approaches half a million. It is significant that the two most imposing palaces in Warsaw are occupied by the Ministry of War and the General Staff. The Poles have always been a fighting race, and to-day, at any rate, the army takes first place in their minds.
>
> "Every fifth man in the streets seems to be in uniform.
>
> "One cannot help feeling that it is a pity that so many young men who should be working on their farms or finishing their education are doing drill instead."

By this date, in addition to the French Mission, U.S.A. and British Military Missions were assisting the Polish Government to organise its army and to solve its transport problems. Meanwhile, as the summer passed into autumn, Warsaw continued to press for additional military supplies and this clamour had the desired effect from the Polish Militarist point of view. Reuter circulated the following news item on October 20, 1919, from Paris : "The Supreme Council decided to-day to send military equipment to the Polish Army, for the most part out of French supplies."

By the end of 1919 considerable quantities of military supplies had reached Poland from Allied sources, but even by that date the Poles were not in a position to make an attack on Russia along a 500-mile front without considerable additional aid. The *Morning Post* Correspondent cabled to London from Warsaw on January 5, 1920 :

" What are the chances of the Poles making a really large-scale attack against the Red Army in the spring? To me they seem excellent, provided the proper support is forthcoming. The Army is now extremely short of food and clothing, and in consequence is suffering hardships almost as appalling as those of last winter, and also there is an insufficiency both of ammunition and transport. These things will certainly have to be supplied.

" Therefore it seems that the answer to the question whether there shall be a Polish offensive in the spring against the Bolsheviks lies largely with England and France."

Two days later *The Times* Correspondent cabled :

" If Poland is going to be helped and encouraged by France and England to carry on the war with a view to upsetting the Soviet régime, it is just as important to relieve the internal economic difficulties of the Poles as to supply them with military necessities."

The Times representative had the satisfaction of being able to cable to his paper on February 15, 1920, that " the last two months have seen the stocks of the Polish Ordnance Department much improved " and that by this date General Pilsudski and Patek were confident " in the ability of their army to defeat the Bolshevists."

The Correspondent himself, however, was far from satisfied with the general equipment of Poland's armed forces, and his doubts were confirmed ten days later, February 25, 1920, by the *Daily Telegraph's* Special Correspondent, who cabled from Warsaw :

" The Polish forces are now rather better equipped, but they still lack much which they need and which should be supplied to them, especially machinery of transport.

" The Italians, Americans, and some neutrals have lent a hand, the British have supplied both money and machines, with a staff of officers who have worked wonders in several fields. In reorganising the army the principal rôle has been assigned to the French."

The Government of the U.S.A. was not averse to shipping additional supplies to Poland on sober business terms. The *Morning Post* Correspondent cabled from Warsaw on March 10, 1920 :

" The United States Liquidation Board has entered into a formal contract permitting Poland to buy such surplus American Army supplies as she may desire on a basis of six years' credit at 5 per cent. Collateral with this agreement is another agreement with the United States Shipping Board to provide for the transport to Danzig of all the supplies thus purchased."

However, the Polish Government's thirst for more and ever more munitions was still unquenched and in the same message the world was informed : " In the Diet yesterday emphasis was laid, in the course of the discussion on the Army Estimates, on the necessity of getting war material from the Allied Powers which are demobilising." *It is clear that by this date the Polish and the Allied Governments were rapidly completing their preparations for an attack on Soviet Russia.*

In order to complete our picture it is necessary here to treat of some other developments which had taken place, both within Poland and in regard to the relations between that country and some of her neighbours.

As already mentioned, the " terms of peace laid down " and the " principles enunciated " by President Wilson, and which were accepted by all the belligerent Powers, stipulated for the inclusion in Poland of all territories " inhabited by indisputably Polish populations."

However, almost from the very day on which the independence of Poland was declared, her Government cast covetous eyes on the Russian province of East Galicia, inhabited overwhelmingly by Ukrainians—the Poles there did not exceed at the outside 20 per cent of the population; indeed, the Ukrainians for centuries had regarded the Poles as their historic enemies.

The Polish Government's desire to possess East Galicia is easily understandable. Paderewski wrote:

> "The natural resources of the province are great. In its western section are rich coal fields and salt mines, and in the eastern are oil fields and deposits of potassium salts."

Further, many of the wealthiest landlords in East Galicia were Poles. The area of the province is 50,000 square kilometres, and it had a population of between 4,000,000 and 5,000,000 souls.

The "Ukrainian Government" under Petlura regarded East Galicia (rightly on racial principles) as part of the Ukraine, and his best, in fact his only reliable, troops were drawn from that province.

War broke out between Pilsudski and Petlura in the spring of 1919 for the possession of East Galicia. It is true that in these months the Polish troops were insufficiently trained and ill-equipped, but the Ukrainian troops were in a still worse plight.

The representatives of the Allied Governments in Paris declined to approve a Polish annexation of the province and the representatives of Koltchak and Denikin in the French capital were equally adamant. It was common ground that if the "Whites" were successful in the civil war they would never recognise the secession of East Galicia to Poland.

The Polish troops drove the Ukrainian forces out of Lemberg, the capital of the province, on January 10, 1919, and occupied the city, and on February 20, 1919, an Allied Mission effected an armistice between the two sides,

the terms of which specified the River Bug as the armistice line and the placing of the oil wells in Polish control under Allied supervision.

However, fighting soon broke out again between the two sides with alternating success and the Allied Governments continued their efforts at mediation.

Paderewski returned to Warsaw from the Peace Conference in the first week of May 1919, with instructions to effect an armistice with the Ukrainian forces in East Galicia, but he met with an emphatic refusal on the part of the Diet, since by this date the Polish forces, being better equipped than Petlura's, the Polish Government and High Command were convinced of their ability to drive the Ukrainian troops out of the Province.

Paderewski at first temporised, but, finally, despite his pledge to the Allies in Paris, yielded to the clamour in the Diet. Naturally, he had to try and justify the breaking of his pledged word, and this he did in the course of a speech in the Seym from which we quote the following excerpts:

> "On May 14 I broke off by telegraph all negotiations for an armistice, as I considered that after the way the Ukrainians had behaved themselves an armistice was absolutely impossible. The oppression, violence, cruelty, and crimes committed by them are without parallel. Wounded soldiers were buried alive in a wood near Lwow. Which of us has not heard of the young officer Losia, who, when wounded, was taken prisoner, and after dreadful tortures, was buried alive? The day before yesterday I had news of a young man who was known to me as a child, the twenty-four-year-old Wolsky, who was taken as a hostage, first tortured, and then knouted. He received 110 blows and finally died a martyr's death, together with sixteen of his comrades, killed by the Ukrainian soldiers in Zloczow. Yesterday news came which brought mourning to our Ministerial colleague Linde. His wife's sister was murdered in Kolomia.

" Gentlemen, I am far from blaming the Ukrainian people for such crimes. It was not they who made such an army. Other people made it for them. . . . But speaking of the Ukrainians, I must state that people who do such monstrous deeds cannot be treated as an army."

The terms here used by Paderewski are in complete consonance with the epithets hurled against the Ukrainian " White " forces and political leaders by the politicians and Press of Poland at this time. It will be instructive to compare subsequently the language used about the Ukrainian soldiers at this stage with that used eleven months later about the same " White " Ukrainian troops, when a combined Polish-Ukrainian attack was being made against Soviet Russia.

By May 24, 1919, the whole of East Galicia was in the hands of the Polish forces. Fighting continued during the next two months with alternating success, but by July 18, 1919, the Poles were able to claim that they were in effective control of East Galicia up to the River Zbrucz, which gave them the natural frontier they wanted and enabled them to defend the province, with a very small force, against an attack from the east.

The Peace Conference was still very reluctant to allot East Galicia to Poland, and the " White" Generals who were still striving for " Russia one and indivisible " refused even to discuss the acceptance of the *fait accompli*. Finally, towards the end of November 1919, the Allies offered Poland a Protectorate over East Galicia for 25 years, but the Polish Government refused this provisional solution ; and have since remained in possession of the Province. Henceforth, to quote the words of Count Alexander Skrzynski, former Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, " the problem in fact, if not in theory, ceased to appear in international affairs."

So much for Poland's annexation of East Galicia, which gave her another advantage in pursuing her anti-Soviet policy, i.e. a common frontier with Roumania.

As already mentioned, Poland could have had peace with

Soviet Russia immediately after she had declared her independence, had her Government and the Allies so wished.

On January 29, 1919, and again immediately after the Polish elections early in February 1919, the Soviet Government wirelessed the Polish Foreign Minister, offering to enter into negotiations ; not only were these communications left unanswered, but some days later, after the second message had reached Warsaw, Paderewski, addressing the Diet, declared to the accompaniment of cheers, " Poland demands a strong army to fight Bolshevism."

At this time two different conceptions of foreign policy were being vehemently discussed in Poland. Count Alexander Skrzynski outlines these conceptions thus :

" The first one was relatively modest in territorial claims, conservative in practice, and founded on the principle that Poland must endeavour to keep on good terms with Russia, whatever form of government that State might adopt. According to this theory Poland must not advance too far Eastward and must not allow any elementary cause of political or national friction to arise between herself and Russia. The other theory, reverting in a way to the ancient traditions of Poland, very audacious, but slightly romantic, aimed at the break-up of Russia into her national components, limiting her to a purely great Russian ethnographical territory and surrounding her with a chain of States more or less independent, from Ukrainia in the South, to the Lithuanian and White-Russian State in the North."

The second conception was called the " federalist conception," it was advocated by part of the nobility and wealthy landlords who wanted to recover their properties situated in territories embraced by the federalist programme. Throughout 1919 and in the early months of 1920, the " federalist conception " dominated the foreign policy of Poland with the result that, to quote the words of Count Skrzynski :

" When, on January 29, 1920, the Soviet Government proposed to Poland the beginning of peace negotiations, sentiment for federalistic theory was at its height. The proposals for peace were not given any serious consideration."

As already explained, the Allied Governments throughout 1919 supplied the Poles both with Army Advisers and military supplies and during the first nine months of the year, fighting took place along the entire Russo-Polish front.

The policy of the Red Army High Command at this time was to deal first with the Russian " White " forces and consequently the Polish-Russian frontier was very thinly held on the Russian side. The Poles steadily pushed their line eastwards : they occupied Pinsk on March 8, 1919, Vilna on April 19, 1919, Minsk on August 22, 1919, and on the same day Polish troops stood 40 miles east of Rovno ; on August 28, 1919, they occupied Polotsk, and by the end of September 1919, their centre had penetrated into Russian territory as far east as Bobruisk and their left wing as far east as Olevsk. In brief, by the end of September 1919, the Polish front had been advanced into Russian territory well beyond the racial frontiers of Poland.

Broadly speaking, during the next three months, the front remained stationary, and secret Russo-Polish negotiations (secret, even to the Allied Governments) proceeded at Mikashevitch near Lutsk between the representatives of both Governments ; the leader of the Russian delegation was Markhlevsky. At the same time the Poles were also negotiating with Denikin with a view to establishing a common front against the Soviet forces.

This " White " General later made some bitter comments on these parallel and at the same time " double-crossing " negotiations. He wrote :

" On September 26th, Polish Military and Economic Missions arrived in Taganrog, whither my G.H.Q. had been transferred. The Missions were given a cordial and ceremonial welcome. In the course of our conversations with General Karnitsky, the head of the Polish Mission, I insisted on the maintenance of the temporary frontier between the two countries as established by the Allied Supreme Council—pending the settlement of the destinies of the border territories jointly by the Polish and future All-Russian supreme legal authority. I equally pointed out to Karnitsky the necessity, in our mutual interests, for the Eastern Polish Army to open an immediate offensive along the line of the Upper Dnieper.

" Meantime military operations on the Polish-Bolshevist front were suspended. To our query as to the meaning of this, General Karnitsky replied that it was but a brief armistice ' for purely military considerations.' Activities on the Polish front were suspended for nearly three months.

" It was only some years later that the secret motives of Marshal Pilsudski's policy came to light.

" A secret agreement was concluded between the Polish and Soviet High Command, on the strength of which the Bolsheviks pledged themselves to cease military operations on the Dvina front, and the Poles to undertake no advance for my support in the direction of Kiev.

" The fact of the agreement, moreover, had to be kept secret both from our G.H.Q. at Taganrog, to which a Polish Mission had been sent to carry on fictitious negotiations, and from the Allies who supplied Poland with funds and war material, though not as an abettor of the Bolsheviks and Bolshevism."

As our readers are aware, decisive battles were being fought during these three months on Russian territory between the Soviet and " White " forces.

Poland, after Lloyd George's Guildhall speech (see Chapter XIV), was looking to London for a lead. *The Times* Correspondent cabled from Warsaw on November 20, 1919 :

" Poland is at present hanging on the lips of Mr. Lloyd George, trying to solve the riddle whether there is to be peace or war with the Bolshevists. The Guildhall

speech has had an enormous effect here, and if the Allies want Poland to continue fighting they will have to say so with a very loud voice.

" These considerations weigh very strongly, particularly now that the Government, after being unable to equip the army for a winter campaign, finds itself hardly able even to feed the troops properly.

" The Poles are anxious to trim their sails to meet the wind which blows from Westminster, but the wind defies any weathercock. They are as willing as anybody to fight the Bolshevists if the task is undertaken seriously. They are equally ready to make peace if the Allies say peace " (*The Times*, November 22, 1919).

Pilsudski's aims were not in doubt. He had no desire to help Denikin's forces to victory, because he knew that a victory for the " Whites " would mean that there could be no idea of incorporating in Poland any territory lying east of the country's racial frontiers. In fact, a victory of the " Whites " would, as he well knew, have meant sooner or later the end of Polish independence.

" Undoubtedly Denikin would have received with great gratitude the help of the Poles, but only on the understanding, scarcely concealed, that such help was forthcoming from the Poles as faithful subjects of Russia.

" Denikin reasoning in this way, the Poles could have no interest in giving him help. That is why his episode was played out independently of the evolution of Polish Eastern policy and that is why it never entered into any real contact with it " (so wrote Count Alexander Skrzynski, in *Poland and Peace*, pp. 39–40).

Pilsudski was biding his time. He no doubt calculated that the Soviet Government would be victorious in the civil war, but that afterwards its forces would be so exhausted that the Polish Army, equipped by the Allied Governments, would be able to carry the Polish flag east to the Polish Imperial frontiers of 1772.

When Denikin's defeat was assured, and as he withdrew from the Ukraine, the Polish Army prepared to march further eastward.

By the end of 1919, there could be no question of any Allied obligation to equip Poland to defend her eastern racial frontiers. By that date, the armed forces of Poland, thanks to Allied assistance, stood well out in Russian territory. There was also no question as to the Soviet's readiness to conclude peace with Poland and to recognise the latter's racial frontiers. There never had been any doubt of this, as we saw above.

A united word from the Allied Governments in the first weeks of January 1920 would have brought peace to this part of Eastern Europe, because the Polish Government was in no position to continue the war against Russia. The economic condition of the country was desperate and much of the military supplies which had come from the west had already been used up.

The cables which appeared in the London Press during the spring of 1920 establish these two facts beyond a doubt. Here we can only quote a few typical extracts. The Special Correspondent of the *Morning Post* cabled from Warsaw on January 5, 1920 : " The answer to the question whether there shall be a Polish offensive in the spring against the Bolsheviks lies largely with England and France."

Two days later *The Times* Correspondent cabled from Warsaw : " If Poland is going to be helped and encouraged by France and England to carry on the war with a view to upsetting the Soviet régime, it is just as important to relieve the internal economic difficulties of the Poles as to supply them with military necessities." On January 14, 1920, the *Morning Post* published a cable from their Warsaw Correspondent stating :

" The bottom had literally dropped out of the Polish mark, and almost every business day continues to bring a fresh decline. The pound sterling fetches upwards of

470 marks ; three months ago the figure was 129 and nine months ago 70."

As to the general economic conditions of the country, the Correspondent cabled :

" Certain it is that there is great deprivation in the country. It is not necessary to amplify the idea in order to make it apparent that the present discontent and growing radicalism of Poland is intimately related to the exchange situation. Other causes contribute, such as the food shortage, continued military conscription, unemployment, taxes, and so forth. But appalling prices, consequent upon a nearly valueless mark, intensify tenfold all other evils, and are a major cause, if not the major cause, of Poland's unrest, which finds its chief expression in more and more insistent demands for legislation that verges more nearly upon confiscation and cannot ultimately make for stability " (*Morning Post*, February 14, 1920).

It is clear from these cables that Poland's crying need was peace, and that she was not in a condition to prepare and execute without assistance an offensive against Russia ; yet not only did no word come from the Allied Governments admonishing Poland to make peace with her great eastern neighbour, but apparently a guarantee was given by Paris and London that whatever happened the Allied Governments would defend the eastern racial frontier of Poland.

Patek, the Polish Foreign Minister, spent January 1920 in Western Europe, urging greater Allied aid for his country. The *Daily Telegraph*, January 31, 1920, in a leading article referring to Patek's mission and defending the invasion of Russian territory by Polish forces, regretfully concluded :

" M. Patek, we believe, has left Paris and London without having obtained anything more specific than a general assurance that the Allies would not allow Poland to be crushed."

Whatever the precise terms of that assurance were, the Polish Government appeared to be very satisfied with them

because another Note from Moscow offering to discuss peace, and in the course of which the Soviet Government declared " that in so far as the real interests of Poland and Russia are concerned there is no territorial, economic, or other question which cannot be solved in a peaceful manner," was left for the time being unanswered. On February 13, 1920 (within a fortnight of Patek's return to Warsaw) *The Times* Correspondent in that city cabled: "The movement against making peace immediately with Soviet Russia is gathering strength."

Whilst negotiations were in progress between Warsaw and Paris and London, the Polish-Russian front had not remained in a quiescent state.

The Red Army was still following up its successes against the " White " forces in various parts of Russia ; but this meant that the Russo-Polish frontier had been denuded of Soviet troops, and the armed forces of Poland seized this advantage. They occupied Proskurov and Starokonstantinov (south-western Ukraine) on January 5, and Mozyr (over 300 miles east of their racial frontier) on March 6, 1920. The capture of Mozyr enormously strengthened the hands of the pro-war party in Poland. Four days later, March 10, 1920, the *Morning Post* Correspondent cabled London :

" The Mozyr operation was not on a large scale, although its effects have been very considerable. Whether Poland will now proceed with peace negotiations remains to be seen, but it is certain that there is no reason for her to accept any peace which brings her less than the frontiers of 1772. It should be added that the main object of the present Polish policy is to secure an agreement whereby Russia will definitely recognise the 1772 frontier line."

On March 19, 1920, Patek outlined before the Diet Commission Poland's peace terms. They were :

" (1) Annulling of the partitions of Poland in which Russia participated.

" (2) Recognition of the States established on the ruins of Russia existing to-day.

" (3) Return of the State properties comprised in the Polish frontier of 1772, which ought to be restored to the Polish State.

" (4) Participation of Poland in the gold receipts of the Russian State Bank on the basis of the balance of August 5, 1914, and the restitution of the archives of the libraries.

" (5) Ratification of the treaty by representatives of the supreme body of Russian representatives.

" (6) Poland to decide the fate of the territories situated on the west of the 1772 frontiers, in accordance with the will of the populations."

Respecting these terms *The Times* Correspondent in Warsaw cabled his journal on March 21, 1920 :

" The text has met a quite considerable amount of criticism from the point of view of tactics as much *as from a sense of horror at the character of the demands*. The ideas of the National Democrats about peace are not so much more moderate than those of the Government as to justify their branding M. Patek as an Imperialist, especially since their representatives on the Diet Commission apparently agreed to the principles on which the Note was to be drafted by him. The Socialist organ *Robotnik* shows some consciousness of the effect which the Note may produce abroad, saying that it contains grave faults and will evoke a shriek from Russia and the Entente about Polish Imperialism " (our italics).

The next act of the Patek Government was to inform Moscow that it was willing to discuss terms of peace, that the venue of the Conference should be Borisov, and after some haggling they offered to suspend hostilities in the Borisov sector. Moscow replied agreeing to begin negotiations on April 10, but stipulating that the venue should be some neutral State and that hostilities should be suspended along the entire front during the negotiations.

The Polish offer was intentionally absurd. Regarding it

The Times Correspondent cabled from Warsaw on April 3, 1920 :

" The form in which the Polish peace conditions were drafted for submission to the Allied Powers has certainly alienated much sympathy in Britain and America, and even closely associated peoples such as the Letts have found objections to them. These conditions have not yet been presented to the Soviet Government. If it was not the intention of the Polish Government to do so before the peace delegations met it would have been well to couch them in a form less likely to shock opinion outside Poland."

Count Alexander Skrzynski was even more frank. He wrote :

" When, however, parliamentary and democratic policy did not permit them (the Soviet Peace terms) to be left without an answer, the question of the place where the negotiations might be held was raised in such an offensive spirit that the whole question stopped at that point."

Moscow's reply to the Polish Note stated :

" The People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Chicherin, regards the proposal to carry on peace negotiations in the midst of military operations as absolutely unacceptable, and throws the responsibility for further bloodshed on the Polish Government. The Soviet Government proposes that the peace negotiations should be held either at Moscow, Petrograd, or Warsaw, under the conditions that the delegates shall be allowed to use the telegraph, and that the secrecy of their communications shall be secured.

" The Polish demand for the restoration of the frontiers as they existed in 1772 is unjustifiable, in view of the fact that these frontiers include purely Russian territory."

However, the Polish Government which was working to plan and had no intention of proceeding with serious peace negotiations insisted on Borisov as the meeting-place in its

final reply to Moscow ; in the first week of April 1920, it declared that "*further exchange of notes concerning either armistice or peace negotiations is useless.*"

We repeat that at this juncture the Polish Government did not want serious peace negotiations, and had the Soviet Government agreed to an armistice on the Borisov section only, the result would simply have assisted Warsaw's schemes.

The *Manchester Guardian* Correspondent then in Moscow explained why :

> " Borisov lies on the main Russian railway line, and near the junction of the west and south-west fronts. It permits the Poles to continue their advance against the Ukraine, while ensuring them from flank attack. Further, in the event of hostilities developing it prevents the Russians from counter-attacking at a point most favourable to them. It can have no other than a military meaning, and that meaning is given to it by the Poles, since they no less determinedly refuse to consider the question of a general armistice."

Concurrently with the Warsaw-Moscow exchange of Notes, negotiations were feverishly proceeding between Marshal Pilsudski and Petlura for a joint Polish-Ukrainian advance on Kiev, and the ultimate detachment of the Ukraine from Russia.

However, powerful voices were being raised in Poland against this policy. Grabski, Leader of the National Democrats and a member of the peace delegation, vigorously protested against the terms to be offered to Russia and resigned from the delegation on April 10, 1920.

At this date the armed forces of Poland occupied an area of Russian territory measuring about 500 miles from north to south and 300 from east to west ; the population in this area did not contain more than 8 per cent of Poles.

Even in the third week of April 1920, a word from the Allied Governments would have brought peace. *The Times* Correspondent cabled from Warsaw on April 19, 1920 :

> " The negotiations with the Bolshevists for the arrangement of a peace conference are at present suspended. Poland is waiting for two things—first, enlightenment on the attitude of the Entente Powers towards Poland and the Bolshevists, and secondly, the development of the military operations, which are by no means suspended. Either of these may put a new aspect upon the present state of affairs. A pronouncement is expected from the San Remo Conference, but even silence on the part of the Entente Powers would alter the situation and strengthen the hands of the Polish Government."

No word came from the representatives of the Allied Governments in conference at San Remo, and Warsaw interpreted silence in this case as signifying consent to its plans for a joint Polish-Ukrainian attack on Russia. Between April 15 and 25 a strict censorship was imposed in Poland whilst the final preparations were being completed, and on the latter date the advance on Kiev was begun.

This offensive did not come as a surprise to those who had been following the development of events. Major General Sir F. Maurice thus commented :

> " Every one who has watched the situation in Eastern Europe has been aware of the danger of the renewal of war on a great scale. I have called attention repeatedly to it in these columns for the past three months " (*Daily News*, April 30, 1920).

It is impossible to believe that the Allied Governments were not kept fully posted by their diplomatic representatives in Warsaw as to what was projected, and probably even by the Polish Government itself.

The advance on Kiev was heralded by the following proclamation by Marshal Pilsudski to the Ukrainian people :

> " The armies of the Polish Republic are moving forward under my command, and have now penetrated far into Ukrainian territory. I want all the inhabitants of the

occupied lands to know that the Polish army has come into their midst to expel from the Ukraine a foreign invader, against whom the Ukrainian people had already risen in arms to defend their homes threatened by pillage and massacre. The Polish troops will remain in the Ukraine only such time as is necessary for a legitimate Ukrainian Government to be formed and set to work. So soon as the future of the Ukrainian State is assured and the Ukrainian people rush themselves to arms to defend their frontiers against the return of the invader—the Polish troops will retire, having fulfilled their glorious duty as liberators of the peoples.

" Side by side with the Polish armies, there are now entering the Ukraine many of her gallant sons with the great Hetman Petlura at their head, who during the time of trial through which his country has passed, found in Poland both refuge and protection. I firmly believe that the Ukrainian people will strain all their forces to win back, with the aid of Poland, their liberty and to assume for the fertile fields of their Motherland that happiness and prosperity which are only to be found in peaceful work. The troops of the Polish Republic will bring protection and security to all the inhabitants of the Ukraine without distinction of class, nation, or creed. I appeal to the Ukrainian people, and to all the inhabitants of the country, exhorting them to endure with patience the hard realities of war, and to aid as much as possible the Polish army which is shedding its blood for their liberty."

The Polish Government the previous year, as our readers are aware, had denounced these same Ukrainian troops " with the great Hetman Petlura at their head " in the vilest of terms.

There was no mention in the proclamation that the " Ukrainian Government " agreed, or more correctly, had been forced to accept, the Polish proposal as a price for military assistance against the Soviets.

" A military, economic, and political convention will be concluded which will provide for the inclusion of a Minister of Polish Affairs and also another Minister of Polish nationality within the Ukrainian Government " (*The Times*, April 24, 1920).

Had the attack been finally successful and the Ukraine separated from Soviet Russia, it would now be enjoying as much independence as East Galicia at the present time.

Though perhaps somewhat surprised by the sudden attack, the Soviet Government did not lose its head, and at once issued a proclamation to its people declaring :

" Until now the Red troops of the western front have been forbidden to advance. We hoped to return to peaceful life, to plough the land, to work at the lathes. But the Polish ' Pans '[1] do not permit you to do so. They want to make slaves of you. You must sharpen your tried weapon for self-defence. You must inflict such a blow on the Polish landowners and capitalists that its echo will resound in the streets of the world's capitals.

" Workmen and workwomen of munition works, to your machines ! French Imperialism is supplying the Poles with war munitions. Increase your efforts in producing all the Red warriors need so that they may not experience any want either in cartridges, clothes or boots.

" Regiments of the western front ! Behind you stand not only the Russian working peasantry, not only all our working and peasant army, but all who are honest among the Russian people and among the workers of the entire world."

Despite the terrific strain to which the Red Army had already been subjected, the Soviet High Command were confident of their ability to hurl back the invaders. As was to be expected, the Polish invasion attracted world attention. In Great Britain the subject was naturally at once discussed in the Press. Thus :

[1] Polish for lords.

"As a climax the Warsaw Government registered a preposterous claim for the severance from Russia of all the territory that lay within the frontiers of the pre-1772 Poland.

"There is no need to say more of that sequence of events than that they constitute the self-proclaimed policy of a Government resolute against peace" (*Daily News*, Leader, May 1, 1920).

"We trust, however, that the Poles will not be led astray by their brilliant military success. The great tasks before them lie within their own borders. They should not burden themselves with external responsibilities beyond their strength. Some of their original demands, as presented to the Soviet Government, were fantastic, particularly the colossal claims for compensation for ancient wrongs" (*The Times*, Leader, May 1, 1920).

These two excerpts represented fairly accurately the reactions of the British Press.

The immediate sequence of events is instructive. Kiev was evacuated by the Russian forces on May 7, 1920.

Three days later, May 10, official confirmation of the Polish occupation of the city appeared in our Press, together with a copy of a cable sent by His Majesty King George to Marshal Pilsudski on the occasion of the anniversary of the voting of the Polish Constitution of 1791. It read :

"On this day, when you are commemorating one of the great events in the illustrious history of your country, I wish to send to your Excellency, and through you to the ancient nation which you represent, the most cordial congratulations of myself and my people and my sincere good wishes for the future of the Polish State.

"My country has watched with the greatest sympathy the resurrection of Poland after the long period of anguish through which she has passed, and is confident that with the dawn of a new era she will enjoy unlimited prosperity and peace."

The Times, in a leading article, coupled both events together, and said :

"The fall of Kiev is a great triumph for the Poles and their Ukrainian allies, as it is a heavy blow for the Bolshevists. The city was entered, according to the Russian wireless, on Friday, after heavy fighting during Thursday and that day, and by the latest reports the Russians are in retreat, followed by the Polish cavalry. King George expresses the traditional feelings of the British people when he conveys to Marshal Pilsudski on the occasion of the Polish National Festival their 'most cordial' congratulations and good wishes for the future of the Polish State" (*The Times*, May 10, 1920).

The Polish fête day was May 3, but the royal cable was not released for Press publication till after the occupation of Kiev. Nevertheless it was afterwards contended by the Leader of the House of Commons, Bonar Law, that the congratulatory cable related solely to the Polish anniversary and had no connection with the occupation of Kiev. But the Polish people and the world at large made no such fine distinctions and it was universally interpreted as congratulating the Polish Government on the success of its armed forces against Soviet Russia.

The matter of the advance on Kiev was, of course, raised in the House of Commons, and on May 11, 1920, Winston Churchill, Minister for War, declared :

"The British War Office have given no assistance to the Poles in this enterprise ; but both the British and the French Governments in former periods—last year and so on—have helped to strengthen and to equip the Polish Army, that being an essential part of the policy of the Treaty" (*The Times*, May 12, 1920).

A not very clever quibble. On the very same day, the S.S. *Jolly George* was being loaded at the East India Docks, London, when the dockers discovered that a part of the

cargo consisted of munitions of war destined for Poland, and refused to proceed with the loading of the vessel. This episode attracted nation-wide (in fact world-wide) attention, especially when it became known that the munitions in question constituted part of the supplies which our Government had placed at the disposal of the Polish Government. When the subject was raised in the House of Commons the following dialogue ensued :

" MR. G. N. BARNES asked whether the Government could yet give any explanation respecting the origin of the contract for the consignment of war munitions for Polish aggression in territory outside the limits prescribed to that country last year in Paris, and whether they could give an assurance that no help, financial or otherwise, would issue from this country in the future for any such aggression.

" MR. BONAR LAW : In October of last year when it was feared that Russian border States would be attacked by the Soviet Government, a request was addressed by the Poles for assistance in military equipment. In consequence of our commitments elsewhere the British Government were unable to give any financial assistance, but offered to supply a certain quantity of surplus stores on condition that the cost of moving them, as well as the arrangements for transport, should be undertaken by the Polish Government. This offer was accepted, and in consequence the material in question became the property of the Polish Government, and part of it is now being shipped by them. Apart from that no assistance has been or is being given to the Polish Government.

" MR. BARNES : Does not the right hon. gentleman think that the position is altogether different now, having regard to the declarations made by the Prime Minister much more recently than October last?

" MR. BONAR LAW : Yes, but as a matter of fact a bargain was made and the material was actually given

to the Polish Government, and to have gone back on that would have been to break the bond.

" LORD R. CECIL asked whether at the time of the bargain any conditions were made as to the use the Polish Government were to make of the munitions?

" MR. BONAR LAW : Certainly not."

Actually even in " October of last year " (October 1919) there had been no danger of any aggression on the part of the Soviet Government against the Border States in general or against Poland in particular but, in any case, in May 1920, the British Government of the day would have been more than justified in refusing to permit the transport of these munitions to Poland as they were now destined to be used not for defence but for aggression.

In this connection it is particularly important to recall that during this period the British Fleet was blockading all Russian ports and preventing Russia from importing munitions. In fact, the British Government at that time seized every opportunity to demonstrate its pro-Polish partiality. Lord Robert Cecil, on behalf of the League of Nations Union, wrote the Foreign Secretary, Lord Curzon, expressing the hope that the Council of the League would be summoned at the instance of the British Government to deal with the situation. Lord Curzon (who had intervened on behalf of the " Whites " both in Archangel and the Crimea) replied :

" I do not see how we can invoke the intervention of the League of Nations to check an offensive by the Poles in the course of their conflict with the Bolshevists. We told them that his Majesty's Government would offer them no advice and that they must choose peace or war on their own responsibility. Having left them free to choose, I hardly think that it is open to us to attempt to repress their action when they have made their choice. Such an attempt would certainly be regarded as intervention in favour of the Bolshevists and against our Allies

—a result which it would be difficult to defend" (*The Times*, May 17, 1920).

The correspondence from which this excerpt is quoted was published in the Press, May 17, 1920. The Noble Lord's policy seemed to be that it was right and proper to intervene on behalf of anti-Soviet forces when the Red Army was successful, but highly improper to intervene on behalf of peace when the reverse was the case.

It will be piquant to recall the terms of this letter when two months later the Soviet forces were approaching the gates of Warsaw.

The capture of Kiev by the Polish Army was a very spectacular event, but one devoid of all military significance, and the occupation of the town was short-lived.

The Polish forces never succeeded in occupying more than a small part of the Ukraine. The Red Army began a counter-offensive along the northern front on May 14, 1920, aiming at the capture of the Vilna–Molodetchna–Minsk railway. This route between the Rivers Dvina and Dnieper is the main route from Russia to Poland and was the most dangerous sector from the standpoint of Poland. The Soviet troops entered Borisov on May 25, 1920, and although in this stage of the campaign they did not attain their objectives, nevertheless by June 2, 1920, they had reached the line Druja (on the Dvina), Postavi (25 miles east of Svonasiani), Lake Narotch-Dolkinov (35 miles north-east of Molodetchno), Borisov, involving an advance of 80 miles deep on a front of 125 miles.

The attack from the north compelled the Polish battalions in the Ukraine to mark time, and made it possible for the Red Army to patch up a defensive front in the south. The Polish authorities, being what they were, repeated the fatal mistake of all the "White" generals. A small news item which appeared in the *Manchester Guardian*, June 7, 1920, attracted little attention, but was pregnant with explosive possibilities.

"Moscow, *June 6, 1920.*

"A peasants' rising against the Poles has broken out in the Kiev district.

"Polish troops have been despatched to deal with the rebels, who are much incensed owing to their recently acquired lands having been retaken from them by the former owners.

"A Polish train with a large number of waggons loaded with munitions has been blown up by the peasant rebels" (*Wireless Press*).

The peasants who constituted the majority of the Ukrainian population were just as anxious in 1920 to drive their Polish "liberators" over the frontier as they were to drive their French "liberators" into the Black Sea a year earlier, and the hostility of the peasantry was an important factor in the final outcome of the campaign.

It naturally took time to transfer Soviet troops from other parts of Russia to the Polish front, but when this had been effected, events moved rapidly. The brilliant and dashing Soviet cavalry leader, Budenny, was transferred, together with his troops, from the Caucasus to the Polish front. He tested the front at various points until he found a soft spot south of Kiev, then pierced the enemy's line, penetrated to Zhitomir 80 miles west of Kiev, and harassed the enemy in the country between these towns.

In addition, on June 11, 1920, Soviet forces broke through the Polish line north of Kiev. The conjunction of these two forces constituted a grave danger to the Polish communications with Warsaw; in fact as a result of this the Polish forces in Kiev were almost cut off and were compelled to evacuate that city on June 12, 1920, and beat a hasty retreat westward. Commenting on this retreat the Warsaw Correspondent of the *Morning Post* cabled on June 12, 1920:

"The evacuation was primarily necessitated by the 'Red' military manœuvres of the Budenny cavalry and auxiliary infantry, which cut rail communication with

Kiev. It was influenced also by the friendly attitude of Western Europe towards the Soviet's commercial agents and the holding up of munitions from England, Czecho-Slovakia and Austria,[1] and the Socialist activity in the Polish Diet in demanding an immediate peace."

Kiev, as just mentioned, was evacuated on June 12, 1920, and two days later the new Polish line extended from the Lower Pripet to Zhitomir (80 miles west of Kiev) and Berditchev.

On June 20, 1920, the Red Army occupied Retshitsa, north of Kiev, and Vinnitsa, south-west of Kiev ; by June 25, 1920, the line was practically identical with that from which the spring offensive was begun, and by the end of the month, the whole Polish Army from Vilna to Kamnetz-Podolsk, a distance of 500 miles, was in retreat. The Soviet forces occupied Mozyr on June 30, 1920, and Rovno on July 6, 1920 ; at the latter town they captured 1,000 prisoners and a large amount of booty, including two armoured trains, two tanks, two six-inch guns, one wireless station, 500 horses, a train and a locomotive.

By the end of the first week of July 1920, the seriousness of the military position from the standpoint of Poland was realised, both in Warsaw and by the representatives of the Allied Governments.

The Government of Poland sent a delegation headed by the Prime Minister, Grabski, to a meeting of the Supreme Council at Spa on July 11, 1920, to solicit Allied aid.

Grabski, perhaps with a sense of ironic humour, in an interview with the Press at Spa, on July 11, 1920, declared that the Soviet forces " were provided with war material of the latest kind, which had been taken from the armies of Denikin, Koltchak, and Yudenitch."

We do not pretend to know what was in the collective mind of the Allied statesmen who met at Spa, nor whether

[1] Organised Labour in countries besides Great Britain had been refusing to handle munitions destined for Poland.

their public professions corresponded with their real ideas ; however, the British Government, acting on their behalf, sent the following message to Moscow on July 12, 1920 :

" The Soviet Government of Russia has repeatedly declared its anxiety to make peace with all its neighbours. The British Government, which is no less anxious to restore peace throughout Europe, therefore proposes the following arrangement with this object in view :

" (*a*) That an immediate armistice be signed between Poland and Soviet Russia whereby hostilities shall be suspended ; the terms of this armistice should provide on the one hand that the Polish Army shall immediately withdraw to the line provisionally laid down last year by the Peace Conference as the eastern boundary within which Poland was entitled to establish a Polish administration. This line runs approximately as follows : Grodno, Vapovka, Nomirov, Brest-Litovsk, Doromuch, Ustilug, east of Grubeshov Krilov, and thence west of Rawa-Ruska, east of Przemysl to the Carpathians. North of Grodno the line which will be held by the Lithuanians will run along the railway running from Grodno to Vilna and thence to Dvinsk. On the other hand, the armistice should provide that the armies of Soviet Russia should stand at a distance of 50 kilometres to the east of this line. In Eastern Galicia each army will stand on the line which they occupy at the date of the signature of the armistice.

" (*b*) That as soon as possible thereafter a conference sitting under the auspices of the Peace Conference should assemble in London, to be attended by representatives of Soviet Russia, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, and Finland, with the object of negotiating a final peace between Russia and its neighbouring states. Representatives of Eastern Galicia would also be invited to London to state their case for the purpose of this conference. Great Britain will place no restriction on the representatives which Russia may nominate, provided that they undertake while in Great

Britain not to interfere in the politics or the internal affairs of the British Empire or to indulge in propaganda. The British Government as a separate proposal suggests that an armistice should similarly be signed between the forces of Soviet Russia and General Wrangel on the condition that General Wrangel's forces shall immediately retire to the Crimea and that during the armistice the isthmus be a neutral zone and that General Wrangel should be invited to London to discuss the future of troops under his command and the refugees under his protection, but not as a member of the conference. The British Government would be glad of an immediate reply to this telegram, for the Polish Government has asked for the intervention of the Allies, and if time is lost a situation may develop which will make the conclusion of lasting peace far more difficult in Eastern Europe. Further, while the British Government has bound itself to give no assistance to Poland for any purpose hostile to Russia and to take no action itself hostile to Russia, it is also bound under the Covenant of the League of Nations to defend the integrity and independence of Poland within its legitimate ethnographic frontiers ; if, therefore, Soviet Russia, despite its repeated declarations accepting the independence of Poland, will not be content with the withdrawal of the Polish armies from Russian soil on the condition of a mutual armistice, but intends to take action hostile to Poland in its own territory, the British Government and its Allies would feel bound to assist the Polish nation to defend its existence with all the means at their disposal."

It is difficult to believe that the Allied Governments, in view of their intimate relations with the Polish Government, could have thought for a moment that the Soviet Government would have found that note acceptable, witness the fact that on the day before this message was despatched to Moscow from Spa, Reuter circulated the following cable from the latter town :

" It is a significant fact that Marshal Foch this morning went to the Balmoral Hotel, where he saw M. Grabski, the Polish Premier, and conferred with the Polish military authorities."

It is therefore not surprising that Moscow saw in this note not a genuine desire to effect peace in Eastern Europe, but a trap—a trap to gain time until additional Allied aid in the form of supplies and instructors had been rushed to Poland.

In Warsaw itself it was being openly and frankly stated that the projected armistice would only mean a temporary cessation of hostilities. The *Morning Post* Correspondent cabled his paper from Warsaw on July 18, 1920 :

" There is some talk of repudiating any agreement made at Spa by M. Grabski, and there is more talk to the effect that no such thing as an armistice or peace is possible under existing circumstances between Poland and Soviet Russia, and that Poland must not neglect the opportunity which the expected temporary cessation of hostilities will afford for strengthening its military establishment."

And as regards the Russo-Polish boundaries proposed in the Allied Note to Moscow—the *Morning Post* Correspondent in the same cable stated :

" M. Grabski, in a speech to the Diet which is to-day fully reproduced in all newspapers, attempts to allay public apprehension regarding Polish destinies by suggesting that the eventual boundaries of Poland as they may be later fixed by the proposed London Conference will be much more favourable than the armistice terms."

The Soviet Government replied on July 17, 1920, to the Allied Note as follows :

" Direct negotiations with Poland are in full harmony with the wishes of the Soviet Government, and it declares, therefore, that if the Polish Government addresses to Russia a proposal to enter into peace negotiations the

Soviet Government will not reject its proposal, and will also consider in the most friendly spirit any subsidiary proposal as to an armistice or some other means intended to facilitate peace negotiations.

" *The Soviet Government also expresses its willingness to agree to a territorial frontier more favourable for the Polish people than the frontiers indicated by the Supreme Council in December last, and proposed once more by the British Government in its ultimatum of July 12.*

" The Soviet Government, in its wish to obtain peace with the British Government, and wishing to meet the latter's desires, confirms once more its willingness to guarantee personal safety to the mutinous ex-General Wrangel, to all persons belonging to his army, and to the refugees under his protection, on the condition of immediate and full capitulation and of surrender to the Soviet authorities of all the territory he occupies and of all the war material, stores, buildings, means of communication, and so on in his power on the same terms as was proposed by the Soviet Government with reference to the Northern Government of the ex-General Miller" (our italics).

Even the most vehement anti-Soviet journals in this country had little criticism of the Russian reply and the Radical and Labour journals welcomed it as eminently reasonable. The Polish Government, much to its regret—it would have preferred that the Allied Governments should negotiate on its behalf—was advised by Lord Curzon to approach Moscow direct, " asking for an immediate armistice and proposing peace."

Whilst these and subsequent Notes were being exchanged the military position of the Polish forces continued to worsen : the Red Army occupied Minsk on July 11, Dubno on July 13, and Molodetchno and Vilna on July 14, and Grodno on July 18, 1920. The Polish Government did not immediately disclose that Vilna had been evacuated, but

when the fact became generally known on July 17, 1920, it caused stupefaction in Poland.[1]

Whilst the general retreat of the Polish forces continued, important related political events were occurring in Paris and Warsaw. On July 20, 1920, Millerand stated that France was prepared to recognise General Wrangel's Government as a *de facto* Government if he were prepared to assume the responsibilities of the former Russian régime, and two days later General Wrangel's Minister of Finance, then in Paris, issued a statement accepting the condition. On the same afternoon, *The Times* Correspondent cabled his paper :

" M. Jusserand, the French Ambassador in the United States, who is now on leave in Paris, General Weygand, Marshal Foch's right-hand man, and M. Vignon, one of M. Millerand's chief assistants at the Foreign Office, have been appointed to proceed to Poland and left this evening after they and their British colleagues, Lord d'Abernon (Ambassador to Germany), General Sir P. Radcliffe (Director of Military Operations), and Sir Maurice Hankey, had been received by M. Millerand."

In addition, the British Government sent a special Military Mission to Warsaw to concert with the Polish and French authorities. These moves in Paris, London, and Warsaw were much canvassed in Moscow and, not unnaturally, were held to justify fully the Soviet's suspicions of the real intentions of the Allies. In Warsaw a new Government came into being on July 22, 1920, under the Premiership of Witosh, and on the same day it despatched thefollowing Note to Moscow :

" The Polish Government has been informed of the fact that the Soviet Government, in its answer to the British

[1] On July 9, *The Times* Correspondent cabled from Vilna :

" It is bitter for them (the Poles) to realize that the Bolshevists are fighting against them with British guns and often in British uniforms (captured in the operations against Koltchak and Denikin). No wonder the wildest reports are current in regard to help given by England to the Bolshevists. Yesterday one Pole assured me that 17 British officers had been captured near Kiev fighting for the Bolshevists."

Note of July 11, stated that it would willingly accept a peace proposition sent to it directly by the Polish Government. The Polish Government, wishing to stop all bloodshed as soon as possible, and to return to peace, proposes to the Soviet Government an immediate armistice and the opening of peace negotiations. A proposal for an armistice has been sent simultaneously by the Chief of the Polish Army to the Chief of the Staff of the Soviet Army."

So serious was the military position by this date, that preparations had been made in Warsaw for a general evacuation of the capital should the fall of Grodno be followed by the capitulation of Brabystok. Moscow, however, lost no time in replying to Warsaw : the following telegram was despatched by wireless at 1.15 a.m. on July 24, 1920 :

" To Warsaw.

" Sapieha, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

" The Russian Soviet Government has given orders to the Supreme Command of the Red Army to commence immediately with the Polish Military Command negotiations for the purpose of concluding an armistice and preparing for the future peace between the two countries.

" The Russian Command will advise the Polish Command as to the place and date for commencing negotiations between the Military Commands of the two sides.

" Cmcherin, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs."

At the same time a wireless telegram marked " Very Urgent " was sent by the Soviet High Command to the Polish High Command in the same sense, adding :

" The Supreme Command will send its representatives, furnished with full powers, to the place which will be indicated to you by the Command of the Russian front, who will inform you as to the place and date when the Polish representatives will be invited to attend."

The Soviet Government, being anxious to establish peace not only with Poland but also with the Allied Governments,

sent at the same time the following despatch to 10 Downing Street :

" The Russian Government expresses its willingness to meet the desire of the British Government as to its proposal to convene a Conference with the purpose of establishing a definite agreement between Russia and other Powers which participate in hostile actions against her or support such, and is of the opinion that the said Conference ought to be composed of representatives of Russia and of the leading Powers of the Entente.

" The Russian Soviet Government agree that this Conference should be called together in London. It makes known, at the same time, to the British Government that orders had been given to the military command to meet the Polish *parlementaires* and to begin with *pourparlers* relative to armistice and peace."

The Russian Notes to Warsaw and London respectively were clear and to the point, but their very lucidity placed London and Paris in a dilemma, because neither Whitehall nor the Quai d'Orsay really desired to establish peace between themselves and Soviet Russia. Both Chancelleries were publicly protesting their desire to assist in bringing about peace between Moscow and Warsaw, but at the same time, neither Government itself wanted to make peace with the Soviet, i.e. to restore normal diplomatic relations with Moscow, and the suggested London Conference on the terms proposed by Moscow could have no other purpose, because the Soviet had already made it clear that only direct negotiations with Poland were acceptable to them and this principle had been tacitly approved by the Allied Governments.

Lloyd George, without loss of time, communicated the Soviet reply to the French Government and he met Millerand, the French Prime Minister, at Boulogne on July 27, 1920, to discuss it. Next day a Note was sent to Moscow, from which we take the following extracts :

" The British Government considers that, if the Allied Governments are to meet the delegates of the Soviet Government with any chance of success, the delegates of the Polish Government, and of the other border States who are concerned, must also be present.

" The Conference should have as its essential object the re-establishment of peace in Europe, and in the first place between Poland and Russia, upon conditions which would secure the independence of Poland and the legitimate interests of both countries.

" The Conference shall also consider the questions which are still outstanding between Soviet Russia and the border States which have not yet signed a definite peace with Russia.

" After the settlement of these questions the Conference *could proceed* to deal with the matters in dispute between the Government of Soviet Russia and the Allies, and the re-establishment of normal relations between them."

Whitehall and the Quai d'Orsay were well aware that this Note would be unacceptable to Moscow, because its proposals had already been rejected by the Soviet.[1] True the last paragraph held out the prospect, though not the promise, of negotiations eventually between the Allied Governments and the Soviet for the re-establishment of normal relations, but this was conditional on a settlement between Russia on the one side and Poland and the Baltic States on the other, and therefore in the nature of things these negotiations could not begin for several months.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to resist the conclusion that the main, in fact sole, object of this Note was to confuse the public mind in Allied countries.

On the very same day as that on which the Note in question was sent to Moscow, the British Minister for War, Winston Churchill, made a bitter and abusive attack on

[1] At this date Soviet Russia was at peace with Estonia and Lithuania; it was negotiating peace direct with Finland and Latvia, and had offered to do so with Poland.

the Soviet leaders in an article, in the *Evening News* (London), entitled " The Poison Peril from the East." He advocated an Anglo-French-German understanding in opposition to Soviet Russia. As one would expect, Churchill's mischievous outburst—which was never repudiated by the Government—strengthened the suspicions (not alone in Russia) that the real aim of the Allies was to gain time to strengthen all the anti-Soviet forces.

Meanwhile, events continued to move rapidly within Poland. On the morning of July 25, 1920, the joint Allied Military Mission, consisting of General Weygand, M. Jusserand, Lord d'Abernon, Sir Maurice Hankey, and General Radcliffe, arrived in Warsaw and were received by President Pilsudski and the Prime Minister, Witosh, the same afternoon. " The arrival of the Allied Missions is a cause of quiet gratification to the Poles," cabled *The Times* Correspondent the same day (*The Times*, July 27, 1920).

The Polish forces continued to fall back, and by July 27, 1920, the Red Army had occupied Sokolka (between Grodno and Bialystok), Wolkowyska (south-east of Grodno), Pinsk, and in the south they had crossed the river Zbrucz near Wolocyzska (east of Tarnipol) and Skald; on the thirty-first day of the month they occupied Bialystok and on August 1 Brest-Litovsk. *By this date the retreat was becoming a rout.*

Meanwhile, Moscow had agreed with Warsaw that negotiations for an armistice and peace should begin at Baranovitchi, an important railway junction behind the centre of the Red Army lines, on July 31, 1920, and the Polish Commission crossed the line of front at 8 p.m. on July 30. They met the Soviet delegates on the Brest-Litovsk–Baranovitchi road.

At a joint meeting on August 1, it was revealed that the Polish Delegation was authorised to negotiate only an armistice and not the fundamental conditions of peace. The Soviet side suggested that Warsaw should be asked by wire to forward the necessary additional credentials, and, in order to make it possible for negotiations to be resumed at Minsk

on August 4, 1920, it further agreed that as soon as a courier had left Warsaw with the mandates it would be willing to proceed with the negotiations for an armistice and for the drafting of the main outlines of peace.

The Polish delegates declined and left for Warsaw on August 2, 1920, to consult their Government. Messages continued to pass between Moscow and Warsaw and although the latter without undue delay agreed in principle to the terms of the proposed conference, the two delegations did not again meet around the table until August 17, 1920.

It is impossible to study the assertions and denials to the Allies made between these two dates by the Governments of Poland and Russia as to responsibility for the delay in the re-assembling of the conference, without coming to the conclusion that Warsaw was deliberately sabotaging in the hope that the Allies would both insist on participating in the negotiations and take the field in their defence. After the abortive meeting at Baranovitchi on August 1, 1920, *The Times* Correspondent at Warsaw cabled on August 3 : " I understand that the point of view of the Polish Government is that they are unwilling to negotiate peace except in conjunction with Britain and France " (*The Times*, August 5, 1920). Two days later, August 5, Reuter cabled from Warsaw :

> " The Polish Government has requested the leaders of the Franco-British Mission to return to London and Paris in order to explain to their respective Governments the actual position in Poland, and to advise their Governments as to the assistance which it is expedient to render her.
>
> " Lord d'Abernon and M. Jusserand will leave Warsaw before the end of the week."

Many similar cables could be quoted which bear out the above view as to the real intentions of the Polish Government. Meanwhile much was happening at the front and in London and Paris. The Red Army occupied Brest-Litovsk on August 1, Butchatch on August 3 and on the same day

debouched along the River Bug on a 66 miles front. They occupied Lutsk, Kovel and Ostrov on August 4, 1920, and Przasnysz (15 miles from the Warsaw–Danzig railway), Sokolov and Vladmir Volhynsk on August 8, 1920. This series of events was being followed closely on the banks of the Seine and the Thames.

The British Foreign Secretary, Lord Curzon, on August 3, 1920, sent another note to Moscow threatening that if the Red Army continued its advance into Poland, the Allies would come to the aid of the Poles. *The Times* (which for some time had been urging the Government to adopt a much more vigorous pro-Polish policy) lashed itself into a fury, and in a leading article on August 6, 1920, declared :

> " It is a terrible truth that once more we stand upon the edge of a crisis fraught with possibilities only less tragic than those that lowered over us in this first week of August six years ago."

There can be little doubt as to what *The Times* wanted. Fortunately for the peace of Europe a new force had arisen in Great Britain, which now burst on the stage, and with which the Government would have to reckon, i.e. the Labour Movement. On the same day as that on which the above-mentioned leading article appeared in *The Times*, Arthur Henderson, Secretary of the Labour Party, sent the following wire to all Local Labour Parties :

> " Extremely menacing possibility extension Polish-Russian war. Strongly urge local authorities immediately organise citizen demonstrations against intervention and supply men, munitions Poland ; demand peace negotiations immediate raising blockade, resumption trade relations. Send resolutions Premier and Press ; deputise local M.P.s."

That wire was sent on a Friday—on the next two days enormous demonstrations were held throughout the country at which resolutions embodying these proposals were

enthusiastically adopted. The opposition of the Labour Movement to the Government's policy was the decisive factor in preventing a declaration of war.

Further, on August 6, Lloyd George agreed to meet Millerand, the French Premier, at Hythe two days later to discuss the situation that had arisen. During the course of the Conference on August 8, 1920, Lloyd George received from London a copy of a statement which had been handed to the Foreign Office on the same day by the Soviet Trade Delegation in London on the instruction of its Government. It read:

> "Immediately on the acceptance by Poland of the armistice terms, which deal principally with the reduction of her armed strength, the Soviet Republic will be prepared to begin withdrawal of her troops to the line drawn by the Supreme Council on December 3, 1918 [? 1919], and indicated once more by Lord Curzon of Kedleston in his Note of July 20 to M. Chicherin, and considerably to reduce the number of Soviet troops on this line, if the Allies—particularly France—undertake not to advance, and not to support any advance, against Soviet Russia on any front and withdraw the army of General Wrangel from the Crimea."

At the conclusion of the second day of the Conference at Hythe, on August 9, the following official statement was issued:

> "The Allies are in complete agreement regarding the action to be taken in reference to the Polish situation, subject, however, to the approval of Parliament to-morrow in the case of Great Britain.
>
> "Mr. Lloyd George to-morrow will make a detailed statement, and pending that there is no further official information to be forwarded to the Press."

Whilst Lloyd George and Millerand were carrying on their discussions at Hythe on the afternoon of August 9, 1920, a very different gathering was being held in a committee-room of the House of Commons. It was an emergency

meeting of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Union Congress, the National Executive of the Labour Party and the Parliamentary Labour Party, at which a resolution was adopted declaring:

> "That this joint Conference, representing the Trades Union Congress, the Labour Party, and the Parliamentary Labour Party, feels certain that war is being engineered between the Allied Powers and Soviet Russia, on the issue of Poland, and declares that such a war would be an intolerable crime against humanity. It therefore warns the Government that the whole industrial power of the organized workers will be used to defeat this war.
>
> "That the executive committees of affiliated organizations throughout the country be summoned to hold themselves ready to proceed immediately to London for a national conference, and that they be advised to instruct their members to 'down tools' on instructions from that national conference, and that a council of action be immediately constituted to take such steps as may be necessary to carry the above decisions into effect."

This decision had immediate and tremendous results. *The Times* apparently realised that the game was up and declared on the following morning:

> "Nobody in this country wants a war with Soviet Russia. The whole feeling of the nation, which is weary of war, is dead against any such suggestion."

Very different from the terms they had used just four days before.

On the same day, August 10, 1920, the Prime Minister, Lloyd George, made his much awaited statement to a packed House. He declared emphatically that the Polish attack on Russia could not be justified, that the sole aim of the Allies was to secure the independence of ethnographical Poland, that Poland had been advised to make peace, and that the Allies would accept any peace arrangements

acceptable to Poland. He also indicated what steps would be taken in the event of an unsatisfactory outcome of the Minsk Conference. Briefly they were :

" No action would be taken except to support the struggle for Polish independence.

" That support would only be given to a nation that struggles for itself.

" No Allied troops would be sent to Poland.

" Necessary military advice and guidance.

" Economic pressure on Soviet Russia either by naval or international action.

" No support if an attack upon Soviet Russia inside her own territory.

" The Allies leave themselves free to equip Wrangel's force with stores.

" Great Britain would cut off trading relations with Russia."

Despite the threats, these terms were relatively mild when one recalls the composition of the Cabinet at that time. This, however, was not due (to quote a phrase much used at that time) " to a change of heart." Winston Churchill explains :

" The British Labour Party had developed a violent agitation against any British assistance being given to Poland . . . councils of action were formed in many parts of Great Britain. Nowhere among the public was there the slightest comprehension of the evils which would follow a Polish collapse. Under these pressures Mr. Lloyd George was constrained to advise the Polish Government that the Russian terms ' do no violence to the ethnographical frontiers of Poland as an independent State,' and that if they were rejected, the British Government could not take any action against Russia " (*The World Crisis : The Aftermath*, p. 269).

Whilst this debate was proceeding in the House of Commons the peace terms which the Soviet proposed offering to

Poland were published in London. As regards the frontier line the terms read : " The final frontier of the independent State of Poland shall, in the main, be identical with the line indicated in the Note of Lord Curzon of Kedleston on July 20, but additional territory shall be given to Poland on the east in the regions of Bialystok and Kholm."

As the terms were even more generous to Poland than those laid down by the Allies, it might have been hoped that at long last both London and Paris would have decided to desist from further interference in the internal affairs of Russia and there can be little doubt that that was now desired if not by the whole British Cabinet, at least by Lloyd George. This, however, was not the policy of France and she was evidently not prepared to act honourably in regard to her ally, Great Britain, let alone Soviet Russia.

Next day, August 11, 1920, the French Government (without any consultation with, or even any previous official notification to, Great Britain) recognised General Wrangel's Government " as the *de facto* Government of South Russia." The news reached London on the afternoon of August 11, 1920, and when the Prime Minister's attention was drawn to it in the House of Commons the same evening, he commented :

" The telegram of the announcement which appears in the evening papers only came into my hands half an hour ago. I read it with very great surprise and anxiety. No information of this kind, official or otherwise, has been communicated to me.

" I can hardly believe it to be accurate, for I had the privilege of meeting the French Prime Minister, who is also the Foreign Minister, on Sunday. We discussed the whole situation at great length on Sunday and on Monday, and there was no proposal before the Conference in respect of the recognition of General Wrangel."

However it was learned the same evening in Paris that there was no doubt whatever as to the official nature of the

communication sent by the French Government to Wrangel.

In addition Paris instructed its diplomatic representatives in London not to have any further dealings with the Soviet representatives in the British capital.

Possibly the action of the French Government may be explained partly by the fact that about this date Wrangel (as we shall see in the next chapter) was meeting with some military success, due to the pre-occupation of the main body of the Soviet troops on the Polish front.

The action of the French Government killed the projected Russo-Allied Conference in London, but there was no reason why it should have precluded a Russo-British Conference. No such Conference, however, took place at that time.

Meanwhile much had been happening on the Russo-Polish front. The Red Army continued its advance and on August 14, 1920, had reached the exterior forts of Warsaw. Complete success appeared to be within its grasp when it received a decisive check, and the correlation of opposing military forces underwent a sudden and decisive change. This change of fortune was due to a variety of reasons.

The Polish High Command by general agreement was hopelessly inefficient, but it had persistently refused to submit to French leadership until the Red Army was within sight of Warsaw. Then complete control was vested in the French General Weygand, a brilliant military strategist.

Warsaw had a magnificent system of fortifications interconnected by roads and light railways, which, though built two generations before, were still in good condition. In addition, under French supervision, an immense system of modern trenches, wire entanglements and machine-gun emplacements had been erected. A special Press Correspondent in the Polish capital at that time cabled: "Only prolonged systematic high-explosive shell-fire could blast a way through" (*Manchester Guardian*, August 17, 1920).

By this date the Polish Government had succeeded in raising the strength of its army to a million, equipped by the Allies with the very latest weapons, in general superior to

those in possession of the Soviet Forces, and, evidently taught by bitter experience, "the Seym voted by a great majority to put instantly into operation agrarian reform to prove that the rural population when joining the army would fight for their own and not for other people's property" (*Poland and Peace*, by Count Skrzynski, pp. 45–6).

As regards the Soviet Forces—the fourth Army had covered 650 kilometres in five weeks and were naturally exhausted; the army was weak in heavy artillery and aircraft and had very little in the way of motor transport; the whole army transport depended on little peasant carts. "Their equipment is not formidable, their transport is not formidable, their artillery is not a formidable one. They have brought no artillery forward that would reduce a second-rate fortress and could not in the time at their disposal," said Lloyd George, the Prime Minister, speaking in the House of Commons on August 10, 1920.

Further, deceived no doubt by the rapid retreat of the Poles and under-estimating the resilience of the latter under Allied leadership, the Soviet cavalry advanced unduly far ahead of the guns, munitions and food supplies; in addition to all these factors there were some grave miscalculations in military tactics. General Weygand, asked by a journalist in Paris on September 3, 1920, to explain the defeat of the Red Army before Warsaw, replied, "One of the reasons for the defeat of the Russians was their overconfidence and contempt for their adversaries. Their troops advanced without any precautionary measures, and were surprised by the Polish counter-attack from Warsaw."

No doubt there were other contributing factors, but the above-mentioned, by general agreement at the time, were the paramount ones. Under the command of General Weygand on the Polish side, the decisive battle was fought before Warsaw on August 15th. Not only was the city saved and a heavy defeat inflicted on the Soviet forces, but the latter were rolled rapidly eastward.

During the next two weeks, the entire Soviet line was

driven back rapidly. By the last day of August 1920, thousands of Russian soldiers had retreated into East Prussia, where they were disarmed and interned; the Polish forces were approaching Grodno, had occupied Brest-Litovsk, and cleared the greater part of East Galicia. By the same date, both the Soviet and Polish delegations at Minsk (no progress towards a settlement having been effected) decided to transfer the venue of the Conference to Riga.

It was realised, both in Paris and London, that the success of the Poles was due in but a small degree to Polish strength and prowess and that it was a success which might not be repeated. Consequently General Weygand and the French and British Press admonished the Poles to be moderate at the conference table, not to push too far east, and to stop talking about the 1772 frontiers. By September 13, 1920, the battle line ran (north to south) from 12 miles west of Grodno, east of Brest-Litovsk, 15 miles west of Kovel, to a point about 45 miles south-east of Lemberg.

A week later, the Polish Army occupied Tarnopol, Brody and Rovno, and on the following day the Russo-Polish peace conference opened at Riga.

Both sides outlined their terms. The frontier offered by the Soviet spokesmen was more favourable to Poland than the Curzon line, but the Polish representatives demanded a frontier line much further to the east and embracing cities still at that time in Soviet hands.

Meanwhile severe fighting was proceeding at the front. The Polish forces captured Grodno on September 25, 1920, and by October 2nd they were in occupation of Baranovitchi, Pinsk and Novo Grodek. On October 12, 1920, after much hard bargaining, the Russo-Polish armistice and preliminary peace terms were signed in Riga and they came into operation six days later. The armistice line was that occupied by the Polish troops on the night of October 18. On the northern section of the front it coincided with the frontiers agreed to at Riga, but further south, at the time of signature, the Poles were well to the east of the provisionally agreed frontiers.

Under the terms of the Treaty of Riga, Poland received territory measuring 52,000 square miles, with a population of 4,000,000 inhabitants, more than had been allotted them by the Versailles Treaty.

The signature of the Treaty of Riga however did not mean the end of hostilities along Russia's new western frontiers. Petlura, who had never ceased hostilities against the Soviet Government, was still in the field, with his headquarters at Kamenetz-Podolsk, when the Russo-Polish armistice came into operation. In addition, Balahovitch, a "White" Russian general, who did not recognise General Wrangel, was permitted by the Polish Government to cross the Polish-Russian frontier into White Russia.

Regarding this new "White Hope" *The Times* Correspondent at Warsaw cabled on October 13, 1920:

> "General Balahovitch will be subject to the Russian Political Committee, which is now leaving Warsaw, and will operate independently, moving northward in the direction of Minsk and Vitebsk, where it is known that the countryside is aflame with revolt against the Soviets. Such revolts will be organised by General Balahovitch, whose popularity amongst the peasants is daily increasing. He has already acquired the sobriquet of the Peasants' General. His forces are regularly organised and thoroughly disciplined, and are known as the Peasants' Army. It is composed of former Red soldiers and officers, who are passionately devoted to the General" (*Times*, Oct. 15).

Balahovitch established himself at Turovo in the Pripet marshes and later occupied Mozyr.

However before the end of November 1920, both the armies of Petlura and Balahovitch had been wiped out as effective fighting forces. In many cases the soldiers of these regiments shot their officers and then went over to the Red Army, in other cases the men simply dispersed to their homes and the remnants retreated into Poland and were interned.

The Times Correspondent again proved to be a quite unreliable guide.

Meanwhile the Russo-Polish peace conference re-assembled at Riga on November 13, whilst three days later the last of General Wrangel's forces left Russian soil, embarking at Kertch for Constantinople and elsewhere. Wrangel's troops as an army no longer existed.

Thus the Soviet peace delegates, for obvious reasons, now faced their opposite numbers with stronger cards in their hands than they had held for months.

Not only was the Soviet's military position stronger, but Poland's economic position was well-nigh desperate. By the fourth week of November 1920, the Polish mark was dropping at the rate of about 50 daily against the pound sterling. It is very questionable whether, were it not for all these circumstances, the Polish Government would have been prepared to carry out honourably the terms of the Treaty of Riga. *The Times* Correspondent at Warsaw cabled his paper on November 20, 1920, that within Poland itself Pilsudski was charged with "unloyal execution of the Treaty of Riga." However the Polish Government issued an official communication on November 22, 1920, claiming that the withdrawal of Polish troops standing to the east of the frontier line was in the process of completion.

This assurance was accepted and the negotiations, which had been interrupted, were resumed.

Whilst the negotiations were proceeding the "Russian Whites" on Polish territory were working hard to prevent a settlement. They constantly alleged that they had drawn the correct deductions from their previous military failures, that they were raising and equipping fresh forces for a march on Moscow in the spring; that the Soviet Government was on the verge of collapse and therefore any agreement made with it would be worthless in a short time; and that (somewhat inconsequentially) Poland would have to defend her frontiers again in a few months.

The Special Correspondent of the *Morning Post* cabled his

journal on December 13, 1920: "I asked General Savinkov whether he believed there would be another attack upon Poland in the spring. Without a moment's hesitation he said emphatically that there would be." Savinkov and his friends found some willing listeners, but the Polish Government were fearful of risking a second gamble, and although the negotiations were complicated and long-drawn-out, the final Peace Treaty was signed at Riga on March 18, 1921, and ratified on the 20th of the following month.

Under the terms of the Treaty the Soviet Government agreed to give Poland 30,000,000 gold roubles as her share of the Tsarist Government's gold reserve, and locomotives, rolling stock, etc., to the value of 29,000,000 roubles as Poland's share of the railway wealth of the autocracy. Commenting on the final terms, Count Alexander Skrzynski wrote: "The conditions of the peace were not very different from the preliminary agreement, notwithstanding that the Bolsheviks recovered their assurance after having in the meantime entirely defeated Wrangel's army, thereby overcoming the last attempt to overthrow their régime."

Had it not been for the complete defeat of Wrangel in the interim, the Polish Government undoubtedly would not have agreed to the terms (generous though they were to Poland) finally accepted. Warsaw pledged itself in the Treaty to prohibit the activities on its soil of "White" Russian organisations, in any manner inimical to the Soviet Government, a pledge which was more often broken than honoured in the immediately succeeding years: Russian counter-revolutionary forces made constant forays from Polish into Soviet territory and retreated again into Poland when driven back either by the frontier guards or by the Red Army.

There was relatively little risk, as far as the "White" Russian forces were concerned, because the Soviet forces were precluded from following them across the frontier. Such infractions of the Treaty of Riga continued for several years, but have lately been stopped.

CHAPTER XVII

THE END OF WRANGEL

IT IS NOT POSSIBLE to raise sufficient foodstuffs in the Crimea to maintain its normal population and it was therefore utterly impossible to feed, from the soil of the peninsula, the tens of thousands of troops and refugees crowded into it in May 1920.

In fact, for many years prior to the period with which we are now dealing, the Crimean peninsula, administratively and economically, formed part of the Taurida Province, which comprised the fertile grain-bearing areas in the steppes lying between the sea of Azov and the Lower Dnieper to the north of the Isthmus of Perekop.

Naturally, the possession of the entire province of Taurida would have made it much easier for General Wrangel to maintain his troops and civil followers in addition to providing him with a larger area for the purpose of raising fresh levies. The occupation of the remainder of the province now became his first objective.

General Wrangel (on whose behalf Great Britain at this time was still negotiating with Moscow) apprised the Allied representatives of his intentions. The British Government disapproved of the project, and Rear-Admiral Hope, who arrived in the Crimea on board the cruiser *Cardiff*, informed Wrangel, in a note dated June 3, 1920, "if you attack, the scheme for negotiations with the Soviet Government conceived by H.M. Government will inevitably fall through, and H.M. Government will be unable to concern itself any further with the fate of your Army."

The General replied two days later that he intended to

persist in his course and expressed the hope that His Majesty's Government "will realise that neither from the point of view of the commissariat question nor from the military standpoint had I the choice of any other course but an offensive."

The British Government was not convinced and immediately withdrew its Mission.

At this date the "White" forces were superior in numbers and much better equipped—thanks to the generosity of the Allied Governments—than the Red Army troops facing them on the Crimean front. Moreover, in view of the negotiations proceeding between London and Moscow, the Soviet forces were not anticipating an attack and were not duly on their guard.

Wrangel's plan was to embark troops at Feodosia and land them on the coast of the sea of Azov in the Kirillovka-Gorieloie area on June 6, 1920, with instructions to advance westward and cut off the railway running from Melitopol to the Crimea.

The "White" forces holding the connections with the Crimea were to advance on the following day, June 7, 1920, and drive the Red troops back towards the Dnieper. The strategy was successful, and by June 13, 1920, General Wrangel's forces were in occupation of Melitopol and the Red Army troops were in retreat towards Kahovka on the Dnieper. Wrangel admits that the "tanks and armoured cars" supplied by the Allies were an important factor in his success (*Memoirs of General Wrangel*, p. 206).

The "White" Army had won an important initial victory, but at a very big price. General Wrangel wrote that in the first two days of the fighting his "losses were very heavy, especially amongst the officers. In one of the regiments of the first army corps all the battalion and company commanders had been killed or wounded."

Fierce fighting continued, and at the end of five weeks from the date of the "White" advance, its forces were in occupation of the most fertile regions of Northern Taurida,

a district equal in area to the Crimea, but again success had been purchased at a fearful price. General Wrangel sorrowfully admitted that at this period all his new "sources of recruitment could not make up for our losses, especially amongst the officers" (*Memoirs of General Wrangel*, p. 222).

One prop on which Denikin had leaned now no longer existed, for the last contingent of British troops sailed from Batum on July 10, 1920, a fact which made its influence felt throughout the Caucasus.

The "Government" had in the meantime sent P. B. Struve[1] to the capitals of Western Europe to try to raise a loan, but the governments and financiers of these countries did not think highly of the security, and he returned empty-handed to the Crimea.

The casualties among officers, as already mentioned, were high, but in this respect the Allies helped by transporting officers as well as troopers to the Crimea from the remnants of the Archangel and north-west Russian "White" armies, as well as from General Schilling's troops who had retreated into Poland.

The "White" forces during this advance took many prisoners. General Wrangel had a regular formula for their treatment. He wrote:

> "In most cases the commanders of the units and the divisional chiefs would make the first selection from amongst their prisoners, and use them partly for service behind the lines and partly for active service. The rest of the prisoners would be consigned to concentration camps under the supervision of counter-espionage agents; the Communists would be eliminated and the rest drafted into the reserve regiments."

"The Communists would be eliminated" is a euphemism for "the Communists would be butchered"!

There was little change in the front between the middle of

[1] In charge of Foreign Affairs in Wrangel's Government.

July and August 11, 1920, the date on which France accorded *de facto* recognition to the South Russian Government.[1]

At that date, Wrangel believed that the action of the French Government was prompted by genuine feelings of goodwill towards his own "Government." He was later disillusioned. In the course of an address at Brussels some years later he declared:

> "At the time when hostilities began between Poland and the Government of the Soviets, France thought it necessary to support the White Armies, which might attract to their front a portion of the Red forces. Later, M. Millerand, the French President, made a public acknowledgment that the help which had been lent to the White Armies had no other aim beyond the saving of Poland" (*English Review*, October 1927).

At that time his forces were having to fight hard to maintain their hold on Northern Taurida.

As our readers are already aware, the British and French Governments had proposed to the Soviet that General Wrangel should be represented at the projected London Conference on condition that he withdrew his forces to the Crimea.

Wrangel had no intention (a fact withheld from the French and British peoples at that time) of falling in with the wishes of Lloyd George and Millerand. He cabled to Paris:

> "To demand the withdrawal of our troops to the Isthmus is to condemn the Army and the population to death by famine, for the peninsula cannot feed them" (*Memoirs of General Wrangel*, p. 241).

However, Wrangel did not tell Paris and London to cease negotiating on his behalf. He was prepared to keep the help

[1] Referring to the effects of this recognition General Wrangel wrote: "This recognition had an especial moral effect, but France had not the time to bring material help of an effective sort into the fray. However, it was this official recognition that enabled the Army to receive a part of the Russian stores available since the Great War in various countries" (*English Review*, October 1927).

of both Governments in reserve in case of untoward developments, but he was not prepared to give anything in return.

Wrangel's policy at this date was to mark time in the Crimea and Northern Taurida, but to carry his campaign into the Kuban. He believed that he still had many adherents among the Cossacks. Two detachments numbering in all 5,000 bayonets and sabres, with machine-guns, big guns, and armoured cars, were embarked at Feodosia and Kertch on August 11, 1920, with instructions to land two days later on the Kuban coast, near Primosko-Akhtarskaia and Anaha, to march quickly on Ekaterinodar and next to sweep the Red Army out of the Kuban.

The landing was carried out successfully, but they met with a very stiff resistance, never reached Ekaterinodar, were in their turn attacked, and compelled to re-embark on August 30, 1920, and return to the Crimea.

Meanwhile, on the northern front there had been much heavy fighting during which the " White " forces had, on balance, only held their ground at a terrific price to themselves. To quote the words of Wrangel : " The Red menace on the northern front had been checked only at the cost of enormous efforts."

However, the expedition to the Kuban brought one important gain to the " White " forces : some five thousand Cossacks who had joined the force when it landed in the Kuban had retired with it to the Crimea bringing also their horses.

During the whole month of September 1920, fighting continued incessantly. The " White " forces only acted on the defensive on the western section of the front, but on the eastern section they occupied Nogalsk and Berdiansk and on the northern section Alexandrovsk (now Shakhty) on the Dnieper. Although the fact had not been publicly disclosed, a British Military Mission in September 1920 was again attached to General Wrangel's headquarters.[1]

Wrangel now made a long and carefully prepared attempt

[1] *Memoirs of General Wrangel*, p. 279.

to advance his front to the right bank of the Dnieper. His forces crossed the fords at the Isle of Khortitza (near Alexandrovsk) on October 8, 9, and 10. They took many prisoners, and a cavalry troop under General Babiev advanced south-westward with the aim of circumventing the Red Army's position at Kahovka. At first it seemed as though the operation would be successful, but on October 13 Babiev was killed ; the Red Army now stiffened its resistance and then counter-attacked successfully.

The " White " forces were thrown into a state of utter confusion. General Dratzenko (in charge of the operations) was forced to order a general withdrawal on October 13, 1920, and by the morning of the 15th all the " White " units had retreated to the left bank of the Dnieper.

The operation had ended in complete failure, and the next question anxiously canvassed was whether the " White " Army would be able to maintain its position in Northern Taurida. It would almost seem that by this date the very course of events had begun to be ironical at the expense of Wrangel. A French Mission arrived in the Crimea on October 19, 1920, and on the following day its head, Count de Martel, handed his credentials to General Wrangel as High Commissioner of the French Republic accredited to the Government of South Russia. The Count arrived in good time to witness General Wrangel and his Government pay a last farewell to Russian soil.

As our readers are already aware, the Russian-Polish armistice was signed at Riga on October 12, 1920. The Polish Government at this date was playing a pretty game of " double-crossing " with the " South-Russian Government."

Wrangel stated :

> " The Crimean representatives of the Polish Government continued to assure us that the Poles sincerely desired to reach an agreement with us, and gave us to understand that the signature of the armistice was only

a forced concession to England, and was far from being a peace."

Later he wrote :

"At Sebastopol I found news awaiting me that Poland had signed the peace.

"The treaty containing the preliminary peace terms had been signed on October 12th, and the interview with the Polish diplomatic representative which had appeared in the papers on October 14th[1] had been given after the signature of the peace treaty. The Poles were consistent in their duplicity."

A fortnight later the Red Army started to cross the Dnieper near Nikopol and on October 28, 1920, they started a general offensive along the whole front. The entire "White" Army was rapidly pressed back, and by November 2, 1920, the Red Army encamped in front of the isthmuses of the Crimea, i.e. they had re-occupied the whole of the territory taken by the "White" forces during the summer months. In addition :

"An enormous amount of booty had fallen into their hands : five armoured trains, eighteen guns, nearly a hundred wagon-loads of shells, ten million cartridges, twenty-five locomotive engines, several trains loaded with provisions and ammunition, and nearly two million poods of corn from Melitopol and Guenitchesk. Our troops had suffered heavy losses, many had been killed, wounded, or frozen. A large number of prisoners and stragglers were in the hands of the enemy : the stragglers were mostly the soldiers of the Red Army whom we had incorporated into our units at different times. There were several cases of wholesale surrender : a whole battalion in Drozdovsky's

[1] Note : In the interview with the Polish Diplomatic representative referred to by Wrangel, the former said : "The Polish Government wants neither the armistice nor a peace. In spite of the terrible Russo-German war which was fought out on Polish territory, the Polish people have nothing but hatred for the Bolshevists ; they are ready to continue the war against them."

division gave itself up" (*Memoirs of General Wrangel*, p. 309).

The question now facing the "White" Army was, Could they defend the isthmuses leading into the Crimea ?

On this subject General Wrangel wrote :

"Six months' intensive work had resulted in the erection of fortifications which made it very difficult for the enemy to enter the Crimea : trenches had been dug, barrages of barbed wire erected, heavy artillery emplaced, and machine-gun posts constructed" (ibid., p. 310).

It was generally believed in the Crimea at that time that the Perekop lines were impregnable, but nature itself now came to the aid of the Red Army. It became intensely cold and the Putrid Sea, through which the Chongar or eastern isthmus ran, froze over. The left wing of the Soviet forces passed over the ice into the Crimea, made an enveloping movement and attacked the "White" forces defending Perekop (i.e. the western isthmus leading into the Crimea) in the rear.

On November 8, 1920, the Red Army had penetrated the "White" lines below Perekop and compelled the latter to retreat to their second line of fortifications. When this news reached Sebastopol, Wrangel realised that the position was hopeless and issued instructions to complete the arrangements already begun to evacuate the Crimea.

On the morning of November 10, 1920, he received the representatives of the Foreign Missions, including Colonel Walsh, representing the British Mission, and "begged them all to interrogate the representatives of their Governments at Constantinople on the question of assistance for us from foreign ships," to cover his retreat and to evacuate his troops and part of the civilian population from the Crimea.

On the same day the "White" forces started a counter-offensive which at first met with some success, but by the evening the Red Army had wrested the last line of fortifications from the "Whites," who retreated, hard pressed by

their opponents. Next day, November 11, Wrangel issued the following order :

" The troops were to break away from the enemy and march to the ports of embarkation ; the 1st and 2nd Army Corps were to make for Eupatoria and Sebastopol, General Barbovitch's cavalry troop for Yalta, General Fostikov's Kubanians for Feodosia, the Don troops and the Terek-Astrakhan brigade for Kertch. The heavy transport was to be abandoned ; the infantry was to pack into the wagons ; the cavalry was to cover its retreat " (ibid., p. 318).

The " White " Army was completely defeated at the front and the pro-Soviet forces in the rear, which had been driven underground, were preparing to welcome the victorious Reds. In this the hour of unqualified triumph the Soviet Government made an offer, which for generosity, probably stands unparalleled in the history of civil war. It was made some hours after General Wrangel had issued the order quoted above. Here are his own words :

" I finished my work late and went to bed, but I was soon awakened. The Admiral of the Fleet had sent Captain Machukov, his chief of staff, to me. Our wireless station had received a message from the Soviets : the Red Command proposed that I should surrender ; they guaranteed the life and personal inviolability of every member of the High Command, as well as of all those who would lay down their arms. *I ordered all the wireless stations to be closed down, except one where the officers were running the service* " (ibid., p. 319 : our italics).

General Wrangel did not explain why he withheld the Soviet's offer from his troops and the civil population, some of whom were then supporting his " Government," but his motives can easily be divined.

It is unquestionable that had that offer been made public it would have been widely accepted and tens of thousands

of Russian *émigrés* would have been saved untold sufferings. Next day, November 12, 1920, the embarkation began in real earnest.

The families of the officers and soldiers, together with the officials of the civil administration and their families, were put on board ship, whilst the troops covered the embarkation.

Every type of craft from sailing boats to battleships were pressed into service. The Allied Fleets, including the U.S.A. and the British in the Black Sea, were loaded to their utmost capacity.

Meanwhile the Red Army was advancing all over the Crimea. It occupied Djanokoi on November 12, and Simperopol on November 13, 1920, and was marching rapidly towards the ports where work was proceeding day and night.

The " White " Army evacuated Sebastopol on November 14, Yalta and Feodosia on November 15, and Kertch on November 16, 1920, and the transports, etc., proceeded to Constantinople. The inhabitants of the ports immediately established local Soviets and sent deputations to meet and welcome the victorious Red soldiers.

In all, about 150,000 including officers, soldiers, civilians, women and children were evacuated from the Crimean ports.

It is not part of our task to follow the later fortunes of these *émigrés*, but it may be said that they were not welcome guests in any country and General Wrangel bitterly complained that all the Allied Governments, including that of France, soon began to regard them as a hateful encumbrance. The French Government, which had accepted the office of protector to the refugees, soon tired of its responsibility, and urged them to return to Russia. Many did so and probably they were the most fortunate. The others were gradually transported to many parts of the globe, particularly to the southern Slav countries : Jugo-Slavia, Bulgaria and Czecho-Slovakia. Those who returned home were

freely pardoned and warmly welcomed. A Moscow wireless message dated February 23, 1921, stated :

> " 2,000 Cossacks of the former army of Denikin and Wrangel have arrived this week in Odessa from Bulgaria. They have been guaranteed the full amnesty and all rights and privileges of returned soldiers and will find the friendliest reception in their homeland where they now return as fellow workers."

The Times of April 13, 1921, published a report that the repatriated Russian refugees " were greeted with brass bands, banners, and speeches by the local Soviet."

As regards those who elected to remain abroad—the following is typical of what they had to face :

> " The refugees are for the most part penniless. A Russian General is playing the piano every night in a popular Belgrade restaurant ; another, I understand, cobbles boots.
>
> " These are the lucky ones ; of the refugees in general, it may be said they are starving. Cases of suicide are not infrequent. If they are unwelcome here, they cannot go elsewhere, for no other country wants them, and no foreign Consul will visé their passports " (*Morning Post*, April 5, 1921).

By the summer of 1923, the last of the *émigrés* (except those who decided to remain in Turkey) had left the inhospitable shores of Gallipoli.

General Wrangel was driven from the Crimea on November 16, 1920, and within a fortnight the armies of Petlura and Balahovitch were wiped out as effective fighting forces. It was, however, not until October 1922 that the last of the Japanese Army of occupation sailed from Vladivostok. The subsidised war and foreign armed intervention were at an end and the banner of the hammer and sickle floated in triumph over one-sixth of the world's surface. The greatest

revolution in human history had won through without compromise to complete success.

. . . . . .

In this and the preceding chapters it has been contended that the ultimate aim of the " White " Generals and their entourages was not merely the overthrow of the Soviet Government but the re-establishment of the Tsarist régime.

This would also appear to have been the considered opinion of the head of the British Military Mission to the Baltic in 1919, General Sir Hubert Gough. Addressing the members of the National Liberal Club on the evening of April 29, 1920, he said " that in his opinion the Russian people as a whole did not mean to have the old Tsarist régime back, and people felt that the Tsarists were only giving lip service to any ideas of democracy, and that their real aim was to get back their own personal wealth and position and let Russia run as it ran before " (*Daily Telegraph*, April 30, 1920).

The " Whites " themselves, perhaps unwittingly, discarded dissimulation at the funeral of General Wrangel at Belgrade on October 6, 1929. Describing that event, *The Times* Special Correspondent cabled :

> " The funeral in Belgrade had the character of an imposing Russian national manifestation. General Wrangel was buried with full military honours ; infantry and artillery detachments of the Yugoslav Army took part in the ceremony as well as detachments of former Russian troops, who were allowed on this occasion to wear their picturesque uniforms. *The procession was headed by the old Russian tri-coloured flag* " (*The Times*, October 7, 1929 : our italics).

And the correspondent of the *Observer* cabled :

> " On Sunday, in accordance with his dying wish, General Wrangel, leader of the last Russian military movement against Soviet Russia, was buried in the little

Russian Church in Belgrade, which he regarded as the last refuge of the White movement.

"Several hours before the ceremony, *which was to manifest the strength and persistence of the Russian monarchist idea*, the streets from the railway station to the old cemetery were lined with mourners and sight-seers" (*The Observer*, October 13, 1929 : our italics).

These proceedings speak volumes : "*The procession was headed by the old Russian tri-coloured flag*," *the banner of Tsardom, and the ceremony* "*was to manifest the strength and persistence of the Russian monarchist idea.*" There are no reasons to doubt that General Wrangel's entourage were here expressing both his and their own political aim .

CONCLUSION

BEFORE BRINGING the narrative to a close and proceeding to summarise the subject and to draw final conclusions, it is necessary to treat of a few additional matters.

There can be little doubt that the main underlying motive actuating the protagonists of armed intervention in Russia was hostility to the Soviet régime ; the fear of a successful workers' Government in any one country.

The blockade of Russia by this country and the Allies has been referred to, but little has been said about its effects. They were very far-reaching. The Lord Emmott Report, p. 106, states :

"The effects of the evidence given before us is to show that the blockade reacted principally upon the exchange of commodities between town and country. *Agricultural machinery, and implements, and manufactured articles in universal use had chiefly been imported into Russia from abroad.* The peasant was no longer able to obtain these articles in exchange for the paper currency he received for his agricultural produce. It is therefore claimed that the incentive to maintain in cultivation the former area of land under corn and crops, and to bring to the towns the surplus fruits of this cultivation, has been largely removed from the peasants. The evidence in our possession, and notably that of a witness, who has worked for many years in the co-operative societies in the North-Western Provinces, and has come into direct contact with the life of the villages, inclines us to conclude that the influence of the blockade was chiefly felt in this direction. We agree, therefore, that the blockade accentuated the difficulties of the Soviet Government in relation to the peasantry, and

we are prepared fully to take into account the effect of these difficulties upon the life of the towns" (our italics).

Prior to the war not less than 50 per cent of the agricultural machinery used in Russia was imported and the effects of cutting off Russia from this source of supply were therefore considerable.

As to the effects of Russia's withdrawal from the war in 1917—if one is to assess them fairly one cannot separate the act of withdrawal from the events which preceded and followed it. It has been repeatedly asserted in Great Britain and elsewhere that this withdrawal prolonged the war and cost the Allied Governments much in life and treasure.

Historic might-have-beens are impossible either of proof or refutation and much can be urged in favour of an opposite contention—that the series of events which occurred on the Eastern war front from the beginning of 1917 onwards did much to bring about the collapse of Germany.

Right up to the end of the World War, Germany was compelled to keep a large army both in Russia and on the Russian frontier. The then British Prime Minister, Lloyd George, who was in full possession of the facts, stated in the House of Commons, on April 16, 1919 :

"The Germans, to the last moment, whilst their own front was broken in France, whilst their country was menaced with invasion, whilst they themselves were being overwhelmed with disaster, they kept a million men in Russia. Why ! They had entangled themselves in that morass and could not get out" (*Hansard*, April 16, 1919, col. 2941).

The German High Command soon learned that the influence of the November (Soviet) revolution on the German prisoners of war in Russia, on the German troops defending the Eastern front and on the German population generally was very serious. Respecting the returned prisoners

of war, General Ludendorff, Chief of the German General Staff, wrote :

"A decided deterioration in the army's *morale* resulted from the re-enrolment, after long leave, of soldiers returned from captivity in Russia. They introduced a spirit of general insubordination, showing itself particularly in definite refusal to return to the front, thinking . . . they were under no obligation to fight any longer" (*My War Memories*, by General Ludendorff, p. 642).

And as regards the troops transferred from the Eastern to the Western front, General Ludendorff stated :

"Divisions recently removed from East to West had not done well under their new conditions and I had had very unfavourable reports of them. In spite of the shortage of men, drafts from the East were received with the greatest reluctance. They brought a bad *morale* and had an unfavourable effect on their fellows" (p. 749).

It is quite clear from the many references which General Ludendorff makes in the volume we have cited that he was convinced that the effects of the Russian Revolution were a major factor in effecting Germany's collapse. Here it is only possible to quote a few more extracts :

"How often had I not hoped for a revolution in Russia in order that our military burden might be alleviated.

"At that time I never contemplated the possibility that it might undermine our own position later on" (p. 413).

"Looking back I can see that our decline obviously began with the outbreak of the Revolution in Russia" (p. 446).

"Joffe,[1] while Bolshevism showed itself officially obsequious towards Germany, was able to undermine the fighting power of the German people in a way that the

[1] Joffe was the then Soviet representative in Berlin.

Entente alone, despite blockade and propaganda, could never have done" (p. 644–5).

These and many other references demonstrate that, in Ludendorff's considered judgment, the Russian Revolution definitely hastened the military collapse of Germany. His opinion is shared by Hindenburg's then Chief of Staff, General Hoffman, who was reputed by many German officers to be the real genius of the war. Hoffman, in an interview with the Special Correspondent of the *Daily Express*, Mr. H. J. Greenwall, in Berlin, on March 11, 1919, said :

> " Lenin was the Entente's best ally ; without Bolshevism in Russia you could not have won the war."

Ludendorff and Hoffman, who were in the closest touch with affairs, had certainly very decided opinions on this question, and without further labouring the point the reader may now be left to draw his own conclusions.

The Soviet Government has been pilloried because it has refused to return unconditionally the British properties which it sequestrated during the period of foreign armed intervention. It is sometimes forgotten to-day that during the World War the British Government sequestrated the British property of German nationals and threw the onus of compensation, under the Treaty of Versailles, on the German Government, a responsibility which the latter never fulfilled. The House of Commons was informed in White Paper Cmd. 2046 that " the catastrophic fall in the mark has reduced to nothing the compensation never adequate which is offered by the German Government to its nationals dispossessed" and that these German nationals had no means of redress. The White Paper continues :

> " It must be remembered that such failure leaves the aggrieved person with no redress whatever. Treaties are bargains between States ; no national has, against his Government, any rights under its Treaty for failure in this or in any other respect " (Cmd. 2046 (1924) p. 7).

Is it reasonable that the British Government should ask the Soviet Government to be more generous than it was itself in a parallel case ?

Sequestration of foreign owned properties, even if not quite at the rate of 100 per cent, did not cease within Allied countries with the cessation of hostilities. Lloyd George, then Prime Minister, in the course of a speech in the House of Commons, on May 25, 1922, referring to a number of resolutions adopted by the Allied Governments at a conference at Cannes in the preceding January, said :

> " The first Resolution acknowledges the sovereign right of a State to do what it likes within its own territory with property. That was done in Czecho-Slovakia and Rumania. Property was transferred there with a minimum of compensation. We have had complaints from our nationals. We have never been able to interfere, because the sovereign rights of these communities were involved " (*Hansard*, May 25, 1922, col. 1463).

The resolution referred to was " settled and framed by three leading English, French, and Belgian jurists, Sir Cecil Hurst being the Englishman " (*The Genoa Conference*, by J. Saxon Mills, p. 184).

On June 25, 1928, the French franc was stabilised at 20 per cent of its face value ; i.e. the original value had been reduced by 80 per cent and British investors in French Government bonds suffered a reduction of their capital to that extent.

A writer in *The Times* of June 27, 1928, stated :

> " The stabilization of the franc at 124f. 21c. to £1, announced to-day, means that, by a deliberate act on the part of France, British holders of French War Bonds are permanently deprived of four-fifths of their capital.
>
> " In the prospectuses under which the issues were made

by the Bank of England, ' with the consent and approval of H.M. Government,' it was definitely stated that the bonds would be exempt from all French taxation, present and future."

Yet the British Government took no action, and the *Morning Post*, in a leading article, commented :

" The stabilisation of the franc is the recognition of an existing fact ; and the rentier had already learnt by who can say what desperate measures of economy how to exist in the new world. The foreigner who has invested in francs can only imitate his stoicism " (*Morning Post*, June 28, 1928).

True, not a hundred per cent confiscation but perilously near that figure.

These facts are recalled here because it is essential to bear them in mind when considering possible terms of a comprehensive Anglo-Soviet settlement.

Now as to whether the Soviet's counter-claims are valid in equity and natural justice.

Russia was physically and morally incapable of continuing the war long before the Bolsheviks won power.

The Soviet Government made every effort in its power to bring about negotiations for a general peace. It received no reply from the Allied Governments to its inquiry as to what help they would render should it refuse to ratify the provisional Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with the Central Powers.

The Soviet Government did not ratify that instrument before it was reluctantly driven to the conclusion that the Allied Governments at that time did not want a general peace and were not prepared to guarantee such assistance as would have enabled the Soviet to continue the struggle against German aggression.

The Soviet Government had no desire to place the resources of Russia at the disposal of the German Imperialists and would have welcomed Allied aid to prevent this,

provided such aid was anti-German and not counter-revolutionary.

The Russian " Whites " were not " loyal to the Allies," their one concern was the return of their properties and privileges and they welcomed any aid to this end, Allied or German.

Even assuming that at the end of the World War the Allied Governments were morally indebted to the " White " Russians, they could have discharged that debt by accepting the offer of the Soviet Government to meet the Allies around a conference table.

At that time the Soviet Government promised a complete amnesty to all Russians who had taken up arms against them and they would have been prepared to go a very long way towards meeting the other wishes of the Allied Governments in respect to the " Whites."

Further, at the end of 1918, the Soviet Government was willing to make peace with the Baltic States and Poland but the Allies equipped the former and forced them to make war on the Soviet ; they also equipped Poland, thus making it possible for her to advance east of her ethnographical frontiers at the end of 1919 and in the Spring of 1920.

It was the Soviet Government which agreed and the " White " Governments which refused to meet the representatives of the Allies at the proposed Prinkipo Conference. This refusal alone exonerated the Allied Governments from any further obligations towards the " Whites."

In any case, the Allied Governments had no moral right to pursue a policy to which the overwhelming majority of the Russian people was opposed. The Lord Emmott Report states :

" Under Denikin and Koltchak, as under the Soviet Government, the peasants were subject to requisition, and rose in periodical revolt, and their risings in the rear of both were a decisive factor in the overthrow of the White Russian forces. In the south they feared that Denikin would take the land away from them and restore it to its

former owners, whereas the Bolsheviks left them to work their land while denying it to them as their private possession and regarding it as belonging to the community. The peasant proprietor of Siberia do not seem to have entertained any large measure of confidence in the Government of Koltchak" (p. 74).

"With regard to the effects of intervention, the abundant and almost unanimous testimony of our witnesses shows that the military intervention of the Allies in Russia assisted to give strength and cohesion to the Soviet Government, and, by so doing, achieved exactly the opposite of what it was intended to effect" (p. 78).

The personnel of the Committee which drew up this report (Cmd. 1240 (1921)) were :

The Rt. Hon. the Lord Emmott, G.C.M.G., G.B.E., (Chairman)
Sir Ellis Hume-Williams, K.B.E., K.C., M.P.
Sir Wm. Ryland Dent Adkins, K.C., M.P. } Members
The Rt. Hon. Wm. Brace, M.P.

Lord Emmott, Sir Ellis Hume-Williams, and Sir Wm. Ryland Dent Adkins were all supporters of the Coalition Government (1918–1922) and Mr. Wm. Brace was a Member of the Labour Party. The Committee was heavily weighted in favour of the Government which was responsible for the policy of intervention and yet this Committee came to the conclusion that the peasants were opposed to Denikin and Koltchak and that the effect of intervention was to achieve the opposite of what was intended.

It is questionable whether the policy of any British Government has at any time been so emphatically condemned by a Committee appointed by itself, reporting to it, and consisting in the ratio of 3 to 1 of its own supporters.

The peasants, as mentioned in the Report, were opposed to the Denikin-Koltchak "Governments." The urban workers formed the bulk of the Red Army. At least ninety

per cent of the Russian people were opposed to the blockade, armed intervention and the support of the rebel "White" Generals.

In the light of these facts it is indisputable that there was not the slightest moral warrant for the policy pursued by the British and other Allied Governments.

How then in justice and common sense can anyone deny that the Soviet Government is entitled to redress for the devastating effects of the Allied policy?

In connection with the moral responsibility of Germany to make good the damage wrought by the world war, Mr. Lloyd George declared :

"It is in accordance with all jurisprudence that as Germany was the aggressor and the loser she should pay the costs" (*Daily Telegraph*, January 13, 1923).

Surely the Allies' culpability with regard to armed intervention in Russia is not less than Germany's alleged sole responsibility with respect to the World War.

The "White" Generals were in the same category vis-à-vis the Soviet Government as the Generals of the Rebel Southern States were vis-à-vis the Washington Government during the American Civil War.

It will be remembered that during the Civil War in the U.S.A., a number of British subjects interfered—the *Alabama* was fitted out in a *privately owned* British shipyard and acted as a privateer on behalf of the rebels, the Southern States, against the Northern States.

The British Government was not financially responsible for the fitting out of the ship nor did it wittingly assist in any way.

The charge preferred against the British authorities was that they had not used "due diligence to prevent the fitting out of the *Alabama*." Nevertheless, when the case was tried before the Court of Arbitration at Geneva on September 14, 1872, Great Britain was compelled to pay to the U.S.A. 15,500,000 gold dollars, as damages.

In regard to the Soviet Union—it was not a case of negligence but of purposeful intent. The acts of our Government were at best acts of war, but in actual fact, acts of piracy. Can it be disputed that the Soviet counter-claims, in fact, in natural justice and in international law, are at least as strongly founded as the claims of the U.S.A. Government in the *Alabama* case.

It is true that the British Government did not recognise the Soviet Government *de facto* until March 16, 1921, but when the famous test case Luther *v.* Sagor[1] was adjudicated upon at the Court of Appeal before Lords Justices Bankes, Warrington, and Scrutton, on May 12, 1921, the Court decided unanimously that that recognition extended back to December 30, 1917. To quote the words of Lord Justice Bankes :

"... What was the effect of the recognition of the Soviet Government in March 1921, as the *de facto* Government of Russia, upon the past acts of that Government, and how far back, if at all, that recognition extended?

"His Majesty's Government having recognised the Soviet Government as the Government really in possession of the sovereignty in Russia, the acts of that Government must be treated here with all the respect due to the acts of a duly recognised foreign sovereign State.

"From the letters in the Foreign Office it appeared that the Soviet Government dispersed the Constituent Assembly on December 30, 1917, from which date it must be accepted that the Soviet assumed the position of the sovereign Government and purported to act as such" (*Morning Post*, May 13, 1921).

Under this judgment the acts of the Soviet Government were recognised as the acts of "an independent sovereign

[1] The issue that the Court of Appeal had to decide was whether a decree promulgated by the Soviet Government in June 1918, and whether the acts of that Government under that decree both in January 1919 and August 1920 were acts of the Soviet Government as the *de facto* Government of Russia and had to be accepted as such by the Courts of Great Britain. The Court found in favour of the Soviets.

Government" (the words of Lord Justice Warrington) from December 30, 1917, onwards. During the period of foreign armed intervention the Soviet Government was "an independent sovereign Government" and the "White" Russian Generals were rebels and not belligerents.

Aid in military supplies to Koltchak, Denikin, etc., was legally in the same category as aid to the Southern States during the American Civil War.

Legalities apart, the important thing in such cases is the fact, and the fact is that the Soviet Government was the Government of Russia during the period of intervention.

Neither the British nor any other Allied Government declared war against the Soviet régime, but as a result (direct and indirect) of the blockade, foreign armed intervention and the support given to the "White" rebel Generals, not hundreds, not thousands, but millions of Soviet citizens lost their lives.

It was not war! What was it? "Juridical murder" is the term applied when a government takes the life of an individual, whether he happens to be a native or foreign citizen, without justifiable reasons.

Is not this term applicable in the case of the loss of lives resulting from intervention, etc.?

In passing it may be recalled that the British Government usually claims £10,000 for the life of a British citizen juridically murdered by a foreign government.

With regard to the private claims preferred against the Soviet Government—they fall, broadly speaking, into three categories : (1) Government bonds : (2) Bank balances ; (3) properties and investments in industrial and municipal undertakings.

Respecting Government bonds, it is pertinent to recall their origin. The revolutionary movement in Russia became so formidable in 1905, that on October 31 of that year, the Tsar was compelled, much against his will, to grant a constitution with nominal control over finance vested in the Duma.

Nicholas II was never reconciled to this reform and his one hope of overcoming the democratic forces, of re-establishing his power and thus being in a position to break his word, resided in the raising of a foreign loan.

He looked to Paris and London. Both capitals were made fully cognisant as to the aims of the Russian autocrat. In Paris, Clemenceau, in the columns of the *Aurore*, inveighed against further French loans to Russia at that juncture. He wrote :

> " After having furnished the Tsar with the financial resources which were destined to lead to his defeat abroad, it now remains for us to supply him with the financial resources destined to assure his victory over his own subjects " (*Times*, February 1, 1906).

In London, *The Times* published the following cable from its St. Petersburg Correspondent, dated April 9, 1906 :

> " The Opposition organs continue their campaign against the conclusion of a foreign loan before the Duma meets. A host of arguments is adduced in support of their contention, but all amounts to this, that they are afraid the Government, having secured a large sum of money, will try to terrorise the Duma just as it terrorised the elections " (*The Times*, April 10, 1906).

In Russia all Liberal and Socialist opinion strenuously and publicly opposed the conclusion of a foreign loan until the powers of the Duma were firmly established.

Despite these and similar warnings, a joint Anglo-French loan, for the Tsarist Government, was floated in London and Paris, actually a few days after the cable just quoted appeared in *The Times*. This loan amounting to 2,250,000,000 francs was not only the largest loan ever floated in the history of the Tsarist Empire, but Count Witte (Russian Prime Minister, 1905–6) stated that it was the " largest foreign loan in the history of modern nations " (*Memoirs of Count Witte*).

Following the conclusion of the loan, events moved rapidly in Russia. The Duma was opened on May 9 and dissolved on July 22, 1906. Next day *The Times* commented editorially :

> " The Government's arbitrary step, indeed, justifies only too completely those Russian reformers who besought the friends of constitutional liberty in the West not to lend more money to the autocracy. . . . The Russian Government obtained their loan by what now looks uncommonly like false pretences, but they cannot live on it for ever. . . . How can they hope to hold down for ever an exasperated people ? "

By this date, thanks to the Anglo-French loan, the constitutional movement in Russia was beaten down ; the Tsarist Government was again in control.

On the day following the dissolution of the Duma, two-thirds of the deputies met at Viborg (Finland) and in the name of the Imperial Duma issued a manifesto to the nation declaring :

> " Should the Government, however, contract loans in order to procure funds, such loans will be invalid without the consent of the popular representatives. The Russian people will never acknowledge them, and will not be called upon to pay them" (*The Times*, July 24, 1906).

Yet, despite this warning, another loan was floated in 1909. The 1906 loan enabled Tsardom to restore, and the 1909 loan to maintain, its power.

It cannot be said that investors in and purchasers of these bonds had not had ample warning. How can they now expect the victims to honour the debts of the autocracy ?

As for the bank balances : When the " Whites " retreated they rifled the banks of all movable valuables. At most the Soviet received an entry in a bank ledger.

With respect to sequestrated properties, one important fact is usually ignored, the enormous destruction of property in Russia in the course of the civil war. Regarding damage to

railways alone, the well-known British journalist, Mr. Walter Meakin, who travelled widely in Russia in May and June 1920, wrote :

> " A few minutes' study of a map which shows the maze of railways in Russia, will help the reader to understand the situation. Denikin's troops and raiding bands of cavalry had reached as far north as Tambov and Tula. The Czechs had occupied the middle reaches of the Volga, including the great grain producing districts of Samara and Saratoff. Between this district and the Urals were Koltchak's forces, and away to the west Judenitch operated between Estonia and Petrograd.
>
> " The damage to railways and rolling stock during all these operations was enormous, and the task which faced Krassin, Sverdlov, Lomonasov and Pavlovitch (all technical experts with high qualifications) when they set about the work of reconstruction after the various forces had been driven back would have appalled most men. Hundreds of miles of track needed to be rebuilt, and 3,000 bridges, large and small, were damaged or broken down " (*Daily News*, July 14, 1920).

What applied to railways also applied to other industrial undertakings. British properties naturally suffered with the rest. British capital built, or participated in building, railways, factories, tramways, etc., and British artillery and explosives severely damaged and, in some cases, ruined these enterprises. Yet a bill is preferred as if the Soviet had inherited intact undertakings.

As to the Soviet's counter-claims : An incomplete list of these was put forward (Appendix) by the Soviet delegation at the Genoa Conference, in 1922, totalling over £4,000,000,000.

The writers have not weighed and analysed this list and therefore will not express an opinion as to its accuracy, but undoubtedly a formidable bill could in equity be compiled.

The claims preferred at Genoa were not against Great

Britain alone, but against the Allies as a whole. However, it is admitted that the leading rôle was played by Great Britain in the policy of intervention in Russia. The then Prime Minister, Lloyd George, declared in the House of Commons on November 17, 1919 :

> " There is no country that has spent more in supporting the anti-revolutionary elements in Russia, than this country has, and there is no country that approaches this in the sacrifices that have been made—not one. France Japan, America—Britain has contributed more than all these Powers put together " (*Hansard*, November 17, 1919, col. 721).

This final and emphatic declaration brings us to the question, What is to be done in view of all the circumstances, past and present ?

The first thing is to face facts however unpleasant they may be.

The Soviet Government will never recognise the claims of British nationals for sequestrated properties unless simultaneously its counter-claims are also acknowledged. On the other hand, no British Government will ever consent to pay the Soviet's counter-claims.

These are incontestable facts and the sooner they are accepted and acted on the better it will be for both nations. This, no doubt, sounds harsh, in so far as British claimants are concerned, but as a matter of sober fact it is not so. Very many of the poorer claimants sold their bonds years ago for tiny fractions of their original values and in the event of a settlement it is the cosmopolitan speculators, those who took a hundred-to-one chance, who would benefit.

As to the others—the majority long ago lost all interest in the matter. Mr. Richard R. Tweed, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Association of British Creditors of Russia, speaking in London on November 17, 1932, as to the possibility of a settlement of private claims against the Soviet Government, said :

"The difficulties were enormous and one of them was the apathy of the victims. He thought he could safely say that if they and a few determined supporters who were with them relaxed their efforts they would hear no more of it, for he believed that the British Government would be only too glad to let the matter slide" (*Financial News*, November 18, 1932).

Coming from such a source this is very weighty.

Look at and investigate this problem how one will, there is only one realistic solution—a single clause Anglo-Soviet Convention cancelling all British claims against all Soviet counter-claims.

These questions removed, the way would then be clear for the closing of a very regrettable chapter in the relations between the two countries and for the conclusion of a comprehensive political and economic Anglo-Soviet rapprochement which would benefit enormously both countries and strengthen immensely all the forces working for world peace and world economic reconstruction.

DIARY OF EVENTS

1917

Nov. 7. Bolsheviks seized power in Petrograd.
„ 8. Soviet Congress proposed to all Governments and peoples peace on basis no annexations and no indemnities.
„ 27. German Government accepted Soviet offer.
„ 28. Soviet proposed to all Allied Powers to participate in peace negotiations.
„ 29. British Ambassador to Russia declined Soviet proposal.
Dec. 7. Soviet again proposed to Allies that they should participate in peace negotiations.
„ 9. Great Britain again declined.
„ 15. Soviet-Central Powers armistice signed at Brest-Litovsk.
„ 22. Peace negotiations opened at Brest-Litovsk.
„ 29. Soviet again proposed to Allies that all belligerent powers should participate in negotiations for general peace.

1918

Jan. 9. Negotiations renewed at Brest-Litovsk.
„ 18. Constituent Assembly declared in favour negotiations begun at Brest-Litovsk.
Feb. 9. Ukrainian Rada signed separate peace with Central Powers.
„ 10. Bolsheviks declared war at an end but declined sign peace terms.
„ 16. Central Powers denounced Armistice terms.
„ 18. German troops begun advance against Russia on wide front.
„ 24. Bolsheviks by majority vote agreed accept German terms.
Feb.–Mar. British Naval forces landed at Murmansk.
Mar. 3. Soviet Delegation signed peace terms at Brest-Litovsk to be ratified March 17.
„ 5. Soviet enquired what aid it would receive from Britain and U.S.A. should it decide to resist German aggression.
„ 16. No replies from London or Washington. Soviet Congress by majority vote agreed ratify peace terms.
„ 26. Soviet signed agreement to transport Czecho-Slovak troops to Vladivostok.
April 13. Soviet Government wiped out organised anarchist forces in Moscow.

April 20. Colonel Robins declared internal opposition to Soviet Government crushed.
May 5. Trotsky offered collaborate with Allies on conditions.
„ 26. Czecho-Slovak troops treacherously occupied Chelyabinsk.
„ 31. 12,000 Czecho-Slovak troops had reached Vladivostok.
„ 31. More Allied forces landed at Murmansk.
June 4. Allied representatives protested against disarmament of Czecho-Slovak troops.
„ 28. Soviet Government protested against Allied occupation of Murmansk.
„ 29. Allied forces occupied Vladivostok.
„ 29. Still more Allied forces landed in Northern Russia.
July 8. Port of Kem occupied by Allied troops.
Aug. 2. Allies occupied Archangel.
„ 3, 3, 8. Japanese, U.S.A., and British declarations to Russian people.
Sept. 5. Tsarist Officers overthrew Archangel Government.
„ 5. Omsk Government established.
„ 8. Archangel Government reinstated by Allies.
„ 8. Kazan occupied by Red Army.
Nov. 8. Soviets offered to negotiate peace with Allies.
„ 18. Omsk Government overthrown and Koltchak proclaimed dictator.
Dec. 24. Koltchak captured Perm.
„ 31. Red Army occupied Ufa.

1919

Jan. 3. Red Army occupied Kharkov.
„ 10. Litvinov declared willingness discuss peace with Allies.
„ 22. Supreme Council invited Russian Governments to Peace Conference at Prinkipo.
„ 22. Red Army occupied Orenburg.
„ 24. White " Governments " refused attend Prinkipo Conference.
„ 24. Red Army captured Uralsk.
„ 29. Soviet offered Poland peace.
Feb. 4. Soviet Government agreed to participate Prinkipo Conference.
„ 5. Soviet forces captured Kiev.
„ 12. " White " troops reached Caspian. Northern Caucasus in hands Denikin.
„ 13. Announced Baltic States would be represented Prinkipo Conference.
Mar. 1. British flotilla in control of Caspian Sea.
„ 8. Poles occupied Pinsk.
„ 8. Red Army occupied Kherson.

Mar. 14. Koltchak occupied Ufa.
April (first week). Appeal for volunteers to relieve British troops North Russia.
„ 6. Mutiny in French Fleet at Odessa. Allies evacuated the port.
„ 7. Romanov Colony evacuated from Crimea.
„ 15. British war material continued pouring into Novo-Rossisk.
„ 18. Koltchak within 35 miles of Samara and in occupation of Glazov.
„ 19. Poles occupied Vilna.
„ 22–25. Red Army heavily defeated Koltchak's left wing.
May 12. Koltchak's advance definitely held.
„ 24. Don Cossacks launched offensive along Lower Donetz front.
„ (last week). " Relief force " reached Archangel.
June 4. Koltchak accepted with reservations Allied Governments' terms.
„ 7. Order of the Bath conferred on Denikin.
„ 9. Red Army occupied Ufa.
„ 16. Red forces captured Glazov.
„ 24. Denikin occupied Kharkov.
„ 27. Denikin entered Sebastopol and Perekop.
„ 28. Denikin captured Ekaterinoslav.
July 1. Red Army occupied Perm.
„ 1. Denikin captured Tsaritsyn.
„ 14. Soviet forces captured Ekaterinburg.
„ 15–31. Red Army pushed Koltchak's troops rapidly backwards.
„ 30. Kamshin entered by Denikin.
„ 30. Various revolts " White " Russian troops North Russia.
Aug. 12. Koltchak driven across Ural river near Orenburg.
„ 15. Koltchak driven behind Tobol river.
„ 19. Denikin occupied Kherson and Nikolaiev.
„ 22. Poles occupied Minsk.
„ 23. Denikin captured Odessa.
„ 28. Poles occupied Polotsk.
„ 30. Soviet forces entered Orsk 150 miles east of Orenburg.
Sept. 2. Red Army evacuated Kiev.
„ 6. Lieut.-Colonel Sherwood-Kelley's letter in *Daily Express*.
„ 8. Middlesex Regiment sailed from Vladivostok for home.
„ 11. Koltchak's southern army (20,000 men) surrendered.
„ 12. Further despatch British troops for Archangel stopped.
„ 21. Kursk (280 miles south of Moscow) occupied by Denikin.
„ 27. British troops evacuated Archangel.
„ 30. Koltchak reoccupied Tobolsk.
„ 30. Polish front far within Russian territory.
Oct. 6. Denikin captured Voronezh.
„ 11. Yudenitch launched attack towards Petrograd.
„ 12. British troops evacuated Murmansk.

Oct. 13. Denikin entered Orel (200 miles south of Moscow).
„ 15. Koltchak again on defensive.
„ 15. Red Army occupied Kiev.
„ 15. Denikin captured Novosil (just under 200 miles south of Moscow).
„ 16. Yudenitch occupied Gatchina.
„ 19. Red Army evacuated Kiev but occupied Orel.
„ 21. Red Army victorious in Turkestan.
„ 22. Yudenitch within 8 miles Petrograd. Red Army counter-attacked and heavily defeated him.
„ 24. Red Army captured Voronezh.
„ 24. Tobolsk recaptured by Soviet forces.
„ 28. Yudenitch overwhelmingly defeated.
„ 30. Koltchak's " Government " evacuating Omsk.
„ 31. General retreat of Denikin's Army.
Nov. 1. Hampshires sailed from Vladivostok for home.
„ 3–10. Red Army captured several divisions of Koltchak's troops.
„ 8. Lloyd George's famous Mansion House speech.
„ 12. Red Army within 55 miles of Omsk.
„ 12. Red Army broke through Denikin's centre.
„ 15. Red Army captured Omsk.
„ 18. Anti-Koltchak rising in Vladivostok.
„ 19. Red Army occupied Kursk.
„ 30. Denikin's centre and both wings falling back.
Dec. 4. Russo-Estonian peace conference opened.
„ 11. Red Army occupied Kharkov.
„ 13. Red Army entered Poltava.
„ 14. Soviet forces entered Novo-Nikolaievsk.
„ 16. Czech Commander stopped Koltchak's trains.
„ 16. Red Army recaptured Kiev.
„ 20. Koltchak's troops fought last battle in Siberia.
„ 27. Revolutionaries overthrew Koltchak's Government in Irkutsk.
„ 31. Donetz Coal Basin in hands Red Army. Denikin's forces cut in two.

1920

Jan. 3. Red Army occupied Tsaritsyn.
„ 6. Red Army entered Krasnoyarsk; remainder Koltchak's forces laid down arms.
„ 6. Red Army captured Taganrog.
„ 10. Kamchatka passed over to side Soviets.
„ 10. Red Army entered Rostov-on-Don.
„ 15. Koltchak surrendered by Czechs to revolutionaries.
„ 16. Supreme Council decided open trade with Soviets through co-operatives.
„ 30. Yudenitch arrested on charge of misappropriation of funds.

Jan. 30. *The Times* stated " Siberia all Red."
„ 31. Vladivostok joined Soviet.
Feb. 2. Russo-Estonian peace treaty signed.
„ 2. Red Army occupied Nikolaiev and Kherson.
„ 7. Red Army captured Odessa.
„ 7. Koltchak and his Prime Minister executed.
„ 13. Movement in Poland against peace gathering strength.
„ 15. Russo-Czech armistice signed in Siberia.
„ 24. Supreme Council declared could not advise Border States continue war against Soviet.
„ 28. Red Army entered Stavropol.
Mar. 6. Polish Army occupied Mozyr 300 miles east of racial frontier.
„ 17. Red Army occupied Ekaterinodar.
„ 19. Patek outlined before Diet Poland's peace terms.
„ 24. Red Army entered Grozny.
„ 27. Red Army captured Novo-Rossisk.
April 1. Last U.S.A. troops sailed from Vladivostok for home.
„ 25. Polish advance towards Kiev begun.
„ 28. Soviet Republic declared in Baku.
May 7. Kiev evacuated by Soviet forces.
„ 10. King George's message to Pilsudski.
„ 11. London dockers refused load munitions for Poland.
May 25. Red Army captured Borisov.
June 3. Wrangel warned if attacks again will not be supported by Britain.
„ 6-7. Wrangel broke out of Crimea.
„ 12. Polish troops evacuated Kiev.
„ 13. Wrangel occupied Melitopol.
„ 30. Entire Polish Army on 500 miles front in retreat.
„ 30. Russo-Lithuanian peace treaty signed.
„ (end). All European troops had left Siberia.
July 6. Red Army entered Rovno.
„ 10. Last contingent British troops evacuated Batum.
„ 11. Poland appealed to Allies for aid against Red Army.
„ 11. Red Army occupied Minsk.
„ 12. Allied Note to Moscow respecting peace with Poland.
„ 13. Red Army captured Dubno.
„ 14. Red Army entered Vilna.
„ 17. Soviet offered direct peace negotiations with Poland.
„ 18. Red Army occupied Grodno.
„ 24. Soviet offered discuss peace with Allied Governments.
„ 25. Allied Military Mission arrived Warsaw.
„ 28. Allies want peace conference between Soviet and Border States.
„ 31. Russo-Polish peace conference opened at Baranovitchi.

Aug. 1. Red Army occupied Brest-Litovsk.
„ 2. Polish peace delegates left for Warsaw to consult Government.
„ 3. Lord Curzon sent threatening note to Moscow.
„ 4. Red Army captured Lutsk, Kovel and Ostrov.
„ 6. *The Times* declared situation tragically serious.
„ 6. Mr. Arthur Henderson instructed all Local Labour Parties hold anti-war meetings.
„ 9. Joint Executives Labour Movement decided form Council of Action.
„ 10. Lloyd George explained policy Allies respecting Poland and Russia.
„ 11. Russo-Latvian peace treaty signed.
„ 11. French Government recognised Wrangel's Government.
„ 13. Wrangel landed troops Kuban coast.
„ 14. Red Army at gates of Warsaw.
„ 15. Decisive battle fought before Warsaw.
„ 15–31. Entire Soviet line in retreat from Warsaw.
„ 30. Wrangel's troops in Kuban re-embarked for Crimea.
Sept. 1–30. Continuous fighting between Red Army and Wrangel's forces.
„ 13. Russo-Polish battle line east of Brest-Litovsk.
„ 20. Polish Army occupied Tarnopol, Brody and Rovno.
„ 21. Russo-Polish peace conference opened at Riga.
„ 25. Polish Army captured Grodno.
Oct. 2. Polish Army in occupation of Pinsk.
„ 8. Wrangel crossed Dnieper.
„ 12. Russo-Polish preliminary peace terms signed at Riga.
„ 14. Russo-Finnish peace treaty signed.
„ 15. Wrangel withdrew to left bank Dnieper.
„ 28. Red Army started general offensive against Wrangel's troops.
Nov. 2. Red Army encamped before Crimea.
„ 8. Red Army entered Crimea.
„ 11. Soviet offers amnesty to Wrangel and his army.
„ 13. Russo-Polish peace conference re-assembled at Riga.
„ 16. Last contingent Wrangel's troops left Crimea.

1921

Mar. 16. Anglo-Soviet Trade Agreement signed.
„ 18. Russo-Polish final peace treaty signed.

1922

Oct. Japanese troops evacuated Siberia.

APPENDIX

SOVIET COUNTER-CLAIMS

First Category is Made Up as Follows :	Gold pre-war roubles
(1) Russian gold sent abroad in virtue of the financial agreements of 1915 and 1916 with England	567,400,000
(2) Gold sent to Germany in virtue of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and actually deposited in the Bank of France	120,400,000
(3) Gold transferred by Koltchak's Government to the account of financial agents, over	60,000,000
(4) Gold sent by the Provisional Government to Sweden	5,000,000
(5) Gold actually seized by Koltchak in Kazan, less No. 3, and that retaken by the " Red " army	215,000,000
(6) Sums belonging to the treasury, to the foreign section, and to the State Bank (in various currencies)	148,900,000
(7) Direct expenses in connection with the struggle against intervention and for the civil war of 1918–20	2,445,610,000
(8) Direct losses inflicted on Russian industry by the destruction of enterprises, pilfering, etc.	1,353,150,000
(9) Value of food stores and properties of food commissariat destroyed, and expenses in connection with " Red " Army and fleet during the war 1918–20	1,819,770,000
(10) Losses inflicted on railways	1,074,000,000
(11) Losses inflicted on river transport	29,990,000
(12) Losses caused by the war of intervention in the Caucasus	273,800,000
(13) Losses caused by Koltchak in Siberia	542,360,000
(14) Destruction at Yaroslav in July 1918	124,160,000
(15) Losses resulting from intervention in the provinces and ports of Archangel, Murmansk and other White Sea ports	220,620,000
(16) Expenses in connection with the support of victims of intervention and of the civil war	1,813,000,000
(17) Goods removed or spoilt at Vladivostok	800,000,000
(18) Losses of goods in shops, in the ports, or in course of transport abroad, and already paid for by the Direction of the Command abroad	600,000,000
Total	12,213,160,000

(Items 7 and 9 are the minimum expenses involved in the maintenance of the army and fleet—the normal expenses on these services would scarcely have been one-tenth of these figures.

SECOND CATEGORY IS MADE UP AS FOLLOWS :

	Gold pre-war roubles
(1) Losses resulting from the deterioration of the railway system	2,146,900,000
(2) Losses resulting from the deterioration of the internal river communications	113,320,000
(3) Losses in peasant livestock	1,200,000,000
(4) Losses in peasant stores reserves	2,000,000,000
(5) Losses resulting from the destruction or the want of repair of town buildings	2,000,000,000
(6) Losses resulting from municipal railway lines and tramways in thirty-four Russian towns	71,370,000
(7) Expenses in connection with the victims of the civil war (second category of victims supported by the State)	1,440,000,000
(8) Forest losses	2,300,000,000
Total	11,271,590,000

THIRD CATEGORY IS MADE UP AS FOLLOWS :

	Gold pre-war roubles
(1) Economic losses resulting from the blockade of Russian ports, and from the isolation of her Continental frontiers (foreign commerce)	1,400,000,000
(2) Losses resulting from the non-delivery of the Command of Directors of the Foreign Command (less the 600,000,000 gold pre-war roubles charged to the first category)	2,400,000,000
(3) Losses resulting from the reduction in the production of Russian industry (Supreme Economic Council)	5,471,420,000
(4) Losses resulting from the reduction in the work of transport	1,418,000,000
(5) Losses resulting from the reduction in the fisheries, of trade, and of exploitation of the forests	1,589,000,000
(6) Losses resulting from the reduction in agricultural production made up as follows :	

	Gold pre-war roubles	
Rye	431,600,000	
Wheat	739,100,000	
Barley	207,800,000	
Buckwheat and millet	61,400,000	
Oats	343,400,000	
Maize	134,900,000	
Root Plants		
Potatoes	159,200,000	
Sugar Beet	315,500,000	
Oil Grains		
Sunflower	70,900,000	
Hemp	17,000,000	
Linseed	50,400,000	
Textile Plants	206,600,000	
Forage (reduced by civil war to one-third of area cultivated in 1916)	200,000,000	
Cotton (reduced from 785,000 desiatines to 100,000)	320,000,000	
	3,257,800,000	
Products of the Hunt (the reduction is reckoned at 8,000,000 per year for three years. This meant an enormous loss in the working up offurs, etc.)	24,000,000	
		3,281,800,000
	Total	15,560,220,000

FOURTH CATEGORY CONSISTS OF THE FOLLOWING :

EVALUATION IMPOSSIBLE

(1) Loss in livestock and breeding products
(2) Value of food crops not reaped
(3) Famine, in so far as it resulted from the blockade which was an essential factor in diminishing the yield of the soil by withholding necessary agricultural machinery with which to work it
(4) Epidemics of typhus and other infectious diseases, in so far as the shortage of medicaments and the other consequences of the blockade prevented the successful struggle against them
(5) The treasuries of the municipalities, factories, and army stores taken away by "White" armies
(6) Material losses resulting from pogroms (chiefly in the south and east)
(7) Non-evaluated quantities of corn, coal, petroleum, and other products taken out of the country or consumed by the "White" armies
(8) Valuables belonging to the Russian State spent abroad by the representatives of the overthrown Government
(9) Losses of territory; occupation of Bessarabia by Rumania, three districts of the province of Minsk with the town of Pinsk ceded to Poland by the Treaty of Riga, Galicia, Finland (Karelia), Spitzberg Aaland Island
(10) Not noted in the occupied territory; taxes, revenues from national estates, etc.
(11) Private property requisitioned and confiscated by order of the "White" authorities or simply pillaged by the "White" troops and bands who frequently found refuge on the Rumanian, Polish, etc., territory
(12) Restitution in kind of the war materials, the means of transport, and all other goods sequestered or pilfered from 1918–20
(13) Sums standing, November 7th, 1917, to the credit of diplomatic, financial, and commercial representatives in cash or otherwise in credit establishments abroad
(14) Sums and goods of public establishments or relief organisations being carried on abroad at the same date : league of municipalities, Zemstovs, Red Cross
(15) Property and money of the Romanov dynasty, in virtue of their being national property
(16) The property of the Ukraine Rada abroad

SUMMARY

FIRST CATEGORY (approximately)		£1,272,204,166
SECOND CATEGORY	"	£1,174,123,958
THIRD CATEGORY	"	£1,620,897,916
FOURTH CATEGORY	Evaluation impossible	
	Total	£4,067,226,040

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